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IN THIS ISSUE

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 373

EDITORIALS
- Tariffs Must Be Cut 375
- "Sovereign Equality" 375
- Out of the Ashes of Europe *by Freda Kirchwey* 377

ARTICLES
- If They Ask for Bread . . . *by I. F. Stone* 378
- The War Fronts *by Charles G. Bolté* 379
- 25 Years Ago in *The Nation* 380
- Lloyd George *by Kingsley Martin* 381
- Is This "Peace in Our Time"? *by Reinhold Niebuhr* 382
- Bill White's Bazooka *by Alexander Kendrick* 384
- Unseat the Poll-Taxers! *by J. Mitchell Morse* 385

POLITICAL WAR
- India Looks Beyond the War *by B. Shiva Rao* 387
- Behind the Enemy Lines *by Argus* 389

BOOKS AND THE ARTS
- A Tragic Situation *by Lionel Trilling* 390
- Briefer Comment 392
- Fiction in Review *by Diana Trilling* 394
- Drama *by Joseph Wood Krutch* 395
- Films *by James Agee* 395
- Art *by Clement Greenberg* 396
- Dance *by B. H. Haggin* 398

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 399

CROSSWORD PUZZLE No. 110 *by Jack Barrett* 400

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The Shape of Things

THE EASTER DAY LANDING OF THE TENTH ARMY on Okinawa furnishes the most impressive evidence of the rapid growth of Allied power in the far Pacific. It would have taken a brave man a year ago to say that at this time American troops would be three to five hundred miles from Japan, or that such a large operation—the biggest amphibious landing to date in the Pacific—could be undertaken so soon after the end of the major campaign at Iwo Jima. It is encouraging to see the Pacific commanders continuing to learn new lessons and to put them into effect so early. The ten days of pre-landing bombardment at Okinawa are apparently the result of the previous experience at Iwo Jima, which had only three days of pre-landing bombardment. This careful preparation paid dividends at Okinawa in the seizure of two air strips the first day. The effects of the Okinawa campaign will be tremendous: greatly increasing the number of bombers over the home islands, severing the last tenuous supply line to the empire in southeastern Asia and the East Indies, and posing the early threat of further landings in Japan or China.

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THE MAGNIFICENCE OF MILITARY VICTORY stands in sharp contrast with the sad state of political confusion among the major Allies. Within a week the prospects for San Francisco have suddenly grown dim. The proposal to change the distribution of votes in the future United Nations Assembly appears to us unreasonable and mischievous, as we point out in an editorial elsewhere. But as if this were not enough, the sudden demand of the unreconstructed Warsaw government to be represented at San Francisco has dropped like a bomb into the Allied camp. It is too early to know what lies behind this proposal. Some observers in Washington suggest that it may be a Russian move to counter the apparent purpose of Britain and the United States to invite Argentina to San Francisco. If this is the case, indeed whatever may be the case, we hope that the powers will get together immediately and clear up the differences which threaten the hope of international agreement. The present situation is the best evidence that could be given of the absolute necessity of continuous political consultation between the major Allies. Such misunderstandings would never have reached the point of hostile maneuvering if a United Nations Council had existed to deal with them as they arose. We hope the plan for an immediate five-power meeting will be put into effect and the issues of Poland, of Argentina, and of the disposition of Assembly votes will be thrashed out and settled. The unity pledged at Yalta cannot be allowed to crumble.

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SORRY, BUT WE CANNOT JOIN IN THE REJOICING that Argentina has come over to our side—the Argentina of Farrell and Perón. And we maintain our composure not only for reasons of decency. We can understand of course, the feeling of shame which, as Arnaldo Cortesi wrote in the New York *Times* on April 1, fills every man in Buenos Aires at seeing his country become an international joke. What a moment to declare war on Germany! But it is not that. We refuse to rejoice because we consider Argentina and Franco Spain the two principal bases for Nazi post-war activity. Last week the *Voz Argentina,* the radio program conducted by Argentine exiles in Montevideo, said that Argentina's declaration of war on the Axis followed a secret meeting of German and Argentine fascists at which it was recognized that a declaration of war was necessary to the preservation of the Nazi beachhead in Latin America. Whether or not that is true, a declaration of war by the Farrell government amounts to exactly nothing, so far as the democratic cause is concerned. The same Nazi agents who are active in Buenos Aires today will continue their work. Moreover, the Nazis will use to good advantage the place Argentina may be granted in an international organization. Once they have gained entry, the Nazis can apply their old fifth-column technique, just as the quislings in the old League of Nations—the Albanian, Hungarian, and other pro-fascist delegations—worked to further the interests of Hitler and Mussolini and to undermine the peace. We are absolutely opposed to the acceptance of the present Argentine government, in fact, of any fascist government, as a member of the San Francisco conference or of the world security organization.

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BY KILLING THE MAYORS OF AACHEN AND Monschau, the Nazis have proved that they were not making idle threats when they warned Germans against working with the Allies. The three parachutists who descended upon Aachen and, under the very eyes of our soldiers, shot the mayor appointed by the American commander, can be considered heralds of a terrorist movement of which we shall hear more as the invasion of Germany proceeds and until the country is freed from every nucleus of resistance. One of the techniques of the ultra-fanatics who, according to the general assumption, will make a last stand in the Bavarian mountains will consist of murdering all those Germans who might be used in a democratic reconstruction of the country. That orders for the execution of both murders came from above was made evident by the joy with which Radio Berlin broke the news. It was as though we had gone back twenty years to the time when Erzberger and Rathenau fell—under the same hand. For the ideological link between the parachutists of Aachen and the reckless volunteers of the Frei Korps is undeniable. It is hardly surprising that Dr. Goebbels, who in 1935 gave his official blessing to the film "Hangmen and Soldiers," a glorification of the murders committed by the organization Consul and the Erhardt Brigade, should now exhibit his triumphant satisfaction over the murder of the two collaborating mayors. In reply to this act, there is only one course the Allied authorities can take. Every Nazi who commits a deed like the one in Aachen must be court-martialed and shot just as though he had taken the life of an Allied soldier; and the Allies must select for administrative posts in every German community the best anti-fascists they can find.

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THE GENEVA CONVENTION ON WAR PRISONERS has long since proved a scrap of paper in Nazi Germany. The treatment of Russian and Polish prisoners has rivaled for sheer brutality the treatment of the Jews of Europe. Recent reports from prison camps on the western front indicate what we may expect as the war goes into its last desperate phase. In the German prison hospital in Heppenheim 290 Americans lost an average of thirty-five pounds each from undernourishment, all were verminous, and several died of neglect. By contrast, within the American lines in France German prisoners have fared so well that the comparative luxury of their standard of living is provoking bitter resentment among French civilians. In this country the army has lately refused to permit prisoners of war to be used in lumber camps because conditions are not fit for the *Herrenvolk,* and only recently has conceded that the P. O. W. diet might reasonably be brought into line with that of meat-short American civilians. It will be a pity if our guests return to Germany believing that Americans are soft of head as well as soft of heart and that the symbol of our great free republic is the full belly. Certainly, there have been few if any attempts to educate German war prisoners in the basic principles of the democratic system we intend to instal in their homeland, and it has been common practice to leave Nazi non-coms in subordinate positions of control in the camps. We suggest that general improvement of the prisoners and heightened morale among our Allies would result from shorter food rations and more liberal servings of democracy.

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THE VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION, LONG RIPE for an investigation, is going to receive one. Last week even the *Journal of the American Medical Association* took tardy notice of the "continuous flow of charges . . . from a variety of investigators, commentators, periodicals, and publications whose observations have led them to believe that medical care in the Veterans' Administration is on a standard far lower than that prevailing in ordinary practice in the United States." The policies of the Veterans' Administration will eventually affect the health of nearly one-sixth of our total population. *Nation* readers will recall Edward M. Maisel's carefully documented exposé, Should Veterans Have Legs? (March 10), which showed that limb manufacturers, aided by General Hines, had been able to sabotage improved appliances for the crippled. Other investigators have reported on conditions in the veterans' hospitals. A thoroughgoing investigation is in order. Unfortunately, Representative Rankin has managed to persuade the House of Representatives to authorize his Veterans' Committee to look into the hospitals, and, apart from Mr. Rankin's well-known record, it is clear from his preliminary announcement that a whitewash may be expected. It is up to the public to see that a real investigation is conducted. The American Medical Association proposes that it be made "by a committee responsible directly to the executive office of the President."

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AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF CONSTRUCTIVE action in a matter involving interracial relations is afforded by the recent transfer of Council House, a settlement house in the East Bronx section of New York, from the Council of Jewish Women to an intercultural group which will administer it in the interest of a neighborhood now predominantly Negro. The house was built in 1929 to serve the needs of a thickly populated Jewish neighborhood where there were few cultural or recreational facilities. As the Negro population of Harlem began to overflow into the East Bronx in 1941, the proportion of Negro children served by the house increased rapidly, and it became apparent to the directors of this Jewish enterprise that they would soon be operating a completely Negro community center. Other organizations faced with the same anomalous situation have reacted differently: some have boarded up their establishments, others have sold them. The neighborhood has thereby suffered social loss, and the ill feeling between races has been exacerbated. The Council of Jewish Women, wishing to be more constructive, consulted with Negro, Catholic, and Protestant leaders in the neighborhood, set up a new corporation representing all groups, presented the house to it as a gift, and contributed $30,000 toward its expenses for the first three years. Forest House, as it has been renamed, will serve henceforth not only as a community center but as a symbol of interracial good-will.

Tariffs Must Be Cut

THE President's request for a renewal of the Trade Agreements Act is in many ways the most important he has made to the present Congress. Mr. Roosevelt expressed the interests of the country as a whole when he declared that the tariff issue is no longer a question on which Republicans and Democrats should divide. Elimination of trade barriers is essential if we are to have full employment and higher living standards. It is also necessary if we are to lay sound foundations for international peace and security in the post-war period. Yet there will be partisan attacks on the Trade Agreements Act, supported by many sincere persons who believe that the American standard of living is being "protected" by the tariff and that any reduction in our customs duties is a threat to their pocketbooks or their jobs. They fear that if it were not for the tariff this country would be flooded with "cheap" goods, forcing American producers to cut their wages to meet this competition.

Economists have been pointing out for years that these fears are groundless—that no one is ever the loser when he trades something he has in abundance, or can make cheaply, for something he does not have, or can only produce expensively. They have shown that our "protected" industries are not the high-wage industries that have contributed to making American living standards the highest in the world but are low-wage industries. On the other hand, the industries which produce goods for sale abroad, and would benefit most from an increase in foreign trade, pay relatively high wages. Thus it is to the worker's as well as to the country's interest to specialize in the things we can turn out most efficiently and cheaply so that they can be exchanged for the things which other countries can produce cheaply and abundantly.

The reciprocal-trade program was rather cleverly concocted to offset the prejudices of protectionists. Tariff reductions have been made only as part of a bargain in which foreign countries agreed to remove restrictions against American exports. And in actual fact we have succeeded in forcing greater concessions from other countries than we have granted in return. The reduction in trade restrictions achieved as a result of the reciprocal-trade program has not gone far enough to enable the United States to discharge its responsibilities as the world's leading creditor. Because of high tariffs, our people have not been able to buy enough abroad to provide foreigners with the dollars they require to buy the American goods they want and at the same time meet their contractual obligations to this country.

In the post-war period we shall have to place more emphasis on imports. For only through an increase in imports can we hope to expand exports and create the conditions of equilibrium that are necessary for a stable world economy. In practice this means acceptance of the President's request for authority to reduce tariffs 50 per cent below their present rates. The duties on many key products have already been cut under the Hull program by as much as 50 per cent without injury to American producers. We must be prepared to make additional reductions if there is to be a substantial increase in trade after the war.

To a much greater extent than is commonly understood, trade barriers were erected by other countries as a defense against American protectionist policies. But since there is bound to be a tremendous demand for American goods after the war, foreign countries will have every incentive to lower the barriers against these goods if we show that we are prepared to buy more of their goods in exchange. By grasping this opportunity to reverse the forces of economic nationalism which plagued the world between World War I and World War II, we can help build a sound international economy based on rising living standards throughout the world. Failure to grant the President's request would be a bad omen for the San Francisco Conference.

"Sovereign Equality"

LAST Thursday's announcement from the White House opens up a deplorable prospect. Britain and the United States agreed at Yalta to support Moscow's proposal that the Ukrainian and White Russian Soviet Republics should be represented, with one vote each, in the proposed General Assembly of the United Nations.

Formally, the Soviet proposal is unobjectionable. Two political communities, which Moscow describes as self-governing even in foreign policy, are being put up for membership in the United Nations organization. But this is not quite the view of the matter taken at Washington. There it is interpreted as two more votes for the Soviet Union as one entity. Other governments will share this opinion. President Roosevelt, therefore, unlike Mr. Churchill, attached a condition to his agreement. If the San Francisco Conference accedes to Moscow's request, the United States will ask three votes in

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the General Assembly. As it cannot make even a pretense of having junior partners with autonomous foreign policies, who could be separate voting members, it will appear in the undisguised and unpopular role of demanding a triple voice in a body which was supposed to give full expression to the "sovereign equality" of states.

Of course, the comedy won't stop there. France will refurbish its claim to representation for a string of dependencies. Why should not the Netherlands, and any other state with colonies, follow suit? If they do, "middle powers," like Canada and Brazil, will almost certainly demand a multiple vote. The mass of small states will be asked to acquiesce in a formalized hierarchy of power which leaves them on the lower steps. Some of them have qualms enough already about inequalities in the proposed organization. This last indignity may keep them out.

The essential purpose of the San Francisco Conference was to reconcile the lesser nations to a plan of organization which gives special prerogatives and immunities to five great powers. A substantial case had been made out for permament representation of the great powers on the Security Council, and for allowing them a veto on decisions involving the use of force. The justification rests on a difference of function marking off the nations that must bear the chief responsibility and supply the chief means of enforcement. No such differentiation has any place in a body which, like the Assembly, is largely consultative, which cannot command action, and which has no responsibility for enforcement. Its decisions will nevertheless be highly important in the whole economy of the organization, and equal participation in them was held out as one of the chief attractions for the small nations. The newly disclosed bargain would end all that, and if the "Big Three" insist, it may wreck the conference.

Worse than that, it throws back into the arena the whole question of American participation in security organization. Again the old myth of "six British Empire votes" is on parade. In sober fact Great Britain will have no more control over the vote of a dominion than the United States over that of Cuba or the Soviet Union over that of Poland. But sober fact will weigh nothing with those who, now that the subject is thrown wide open, are already insisting that the United States must have six votes or stay out. Their opposition will be reinforced by the international perfectionists, who will condemn the scramble for multiple votes as another manifestation of the "power politics" which, in their view, vitiates the whole Dumbarton Oaks plan. The fat is in the fire; and nothing short of a withdrawal of the proposal will pull it out.

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Out of the Ashes of Europe

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

"If the day should ever come when we must go, if some day we are compelled to leave the scene of history, we will slam the door so hard that the universe will shake and mankind will stand back in stupefaction."
—Joseph Goebbels.

NOTHING Hitler's Wehrmacht can attempt now will stop the torrent of Allied armor pouring through the breached walls of Fortress Europe. The defeated Nazis can do just one thing more: they can organize their defeat, plan it as they would any other campaign so as to gain from it all possible advantage. The alternative would be surrender, and even in this past week, when Allied victories crowded so close upon one another that they could not be marked on the map, few military men predicted German surrender. The German officers who fell into Allied hands through capture or capitulation assumed that the army as a whole would fight on. They knew they were licked, but they expected the Nazi bosses to hold out until the whole land was conquered, and after. Hitler and Goebbels and Himmler have nothing to lose by resisting—except their country. For themselves they delay the predestined end and gain time to organize total catastrophe.

This plan has won a good Nazi-Teutonic label, "Operation Götterdämmerung." It demands a defense of strategic "islands of resistance" such as ports, the rocket-launching bases in Holland, the submarine hide-outs in Norway, even after surrounding territory has been lost; it demands an attempt to make a stand on any lines of defense capable of being held even briefly; and it demands a final withdrawal into the inner fortress of the German-Austrian Alps, from where Nazi bitter-end fighters would carry on guerrilla warfare—by arms and by assassination and by propaganda—to the point of physical annihilation.

In carrying out this strategy of defeat the Nazis will undoubtedly win many successes along the line. They will multiply the casualties among Allied troops. They will give themselves time to kill off their own weak-kneed members, as they have been doing at an increasing rate ever since last July, and perhaps to slaughter wholesale the remaining anti-Nazis in concentration camps and jails, along with those new elements of resistance which emerge as collapse and chaos increase. They will kill the last Jews in Germany if any still survive to be killed. They will plan and carry out the systematic assassination of local officials who take orders from the occupying authorities: two already are dead.

And while these details are being attended to, the more permanent policies of the new underground Nazi Reich will begin to be put into effect. Last Saturday the State Department released a report on a Nazi scheme for post-defeat industrial and commercial activities aimed at rebuilding German power for a new war. The information on which the report was based fills several volumes. It shows exactly how the Nazis plan, through every form of infiltration and especially through existing ties with foreign commercial interests, to revive their pre-war cartel agreements, recover their seized industrial plants in other countries, and reestablish their control over important patents. Another story, told by I. F. Stone in *PM* almost a week earlier, of a meeting of German industrialists and officials held last August in Strasbourg, exposed even more concretely Hitler's scheme of permanent political warfare. To provide the best possible conditions for this come-back, the effort to divide the Allied nations will be stepped up and every other familiar form of political sabotage continued.

No one knows the detailed Allied plan for the future control of Germany. Perhaps more exists. In any case what actually happens is likely to follow no predevised program. We can only hope that the disastrous mistakes made in other reconquered countries—and in the areas of Germany first invaded—will not be repeated in the Reich as a whole. It is encouraging to read that the AMG officer in Frankfort, Lieutenant Colonel Howard D. Criswell, appointed as Bürgermeister and Police Chief two anti-Nazis; and he did it immediately, while the snipers were still at work. This is an innovation, as American war correspondents on the German front can testify. If it is made a precedent, the breakdown of civilian morale and of whatever democratic sentiment exists in Germany may be avoided. The reconstruction of any sort of ordered life is going to be hard enough, no matter how wise the occupying authorities. It will be impossible if Nazis—however passive or perfunctory—are left in office. To root them out will require a genuine wish, which was nowhere evident in Italy or North Africa, to identify and work with anti-fascists. What is done in this regard in the early days of our occupation may determine political developments for years to come. A repetition in Germany of the Badoglio-Roatta policy would guarantee the survival of those military and industrial interests on whom the Nazis depend for the success of their continued revolution.

The defeat of that revolution will be accomplished not by victory in war, not by "hard" peace terms or severe and prolonged military control, not by the security system to be built at San Francisco—not by any of these, although all are necessary prerequisites—but only by a democratic counter-revolution. If fascism is to be crushed in its vital center—in Hitler's Germany—a new policy must be instituted from one end of Europe to the other. The Allies must reconcile themselves to the rise of popular forces, they must permit radical social and political change, and they must systematically give democrats rather than fascists the responsibility for directing civilian life.

It is commonly said that the future of Germany will determine the future of Europe. The reverse is closer to the truth. One might say: As Europe goes, so goes Germany. Only in a Europe freed from reactionary political and industrial control, from the domination of Junkers—of whatever nationality—and their political spokesmen, from the subtle controls of the church of Rome, can one hope for the rise of a decent, democratic Germany. While the Allied armies sweep into the heart of Hitler's Reich we are bound to ask how they intend to use their massive victory. As Hanson Baldwin said in the New York *Times* on Sunday: "A challenge to all we have fought for lies in the ashes of Europe."

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If They Ask for Bread . . .

BY I. F. STONE

Washington, March 31

THE first concrete tonnage figures on the UNRRA are not impressive. The Canadian Ambassador, L. B. Pearson, who is chairman of the UNRRA's committee on supplies, issued a statement yesterday in which he said that 30,000 tons of goods had already been shipped *or loaded*. He said that the UNRRA hoped to load 60,000 more tons in April and to send at least 480,000 tons to Europe by the end of June. The magnitude of these actual and prospective figures may be gauged by some others recently disclosed by Carl Levin in two excellent articles on the UNRRA published in the New York *Herald Tribune* of March 12 and 13. Levin reported that the United States Army, assuming that the Germans would give up once we gained a secure foothold on the continent, had planned to send 2,000,000 tons of relief supplies into France in the first six months after D-Day. Actual shipments between June 6 and December 31 were only 262,000 tons. This was admittedly inadequate for France alone, but it seems enormous beside the 30,000 tons the UNRRA has so far "shipped or loaded." The UNRRA figures hardly measure up to the promise implied when the President told the first meeting of the UNRRA in November, 1943, that "we mean business in this war in the political and humanitarian sense just as surely as we mean business in the military sense." The "business" has not been very lively.

This is neither the President's fault nor the UNRRA's. Mr. Roosevelt's sincere desire to help is beyond question. Unfortunately it is not a situation which can be solved by pressing a button, even a button in the White House. Governor Lehman and most of his staff are about as sympathetic, conscientious, and able a group as the President could have gathered for the purpose. But they are hemmed in on all sides by men and agencies concerned with other matters. Ambassador Pearson indicated some of them when he warned that the prospective UNRRA shipments he had announced depended on the full support of the supplying countries and on improvement in the tight shipping situation. Ships are the major bottleneck. The army and navy naturally and properly have first call upon them, but I wish it were possible for some independent agency, perhaps a committee of Congress, to give us some insight into how wisely ships are being used. Even civilian agencies of government such as the UNRRA seem unable to get any clear picture of what shipping is available or how it is being used. In this, as in other contacts with civilian officials, the army tends to be high-handed.

I know very little about shipping. But in an investigation I made at the time of the Indian famine in the fall of 1943 I did find evidence that political considerations—Anglo-American shipping "spheres of influence"—blocked the rationalization of routes, that a good deal of food could be stowed away on boats carrying munitions, and that suggestions from the maritime unions for greater efficiency were not being given the attention they deserved. I was told that the army could economize on shipping space without hurting the war effort. An example cited was Coca-Cola, which is shipped in bottles already carbonated instead of in the condensed form of syrup to which carbonated water can be added when served. I suspect that in many similar instances room could be found for relief supplies without impairing military efficiency; and I rather imagine most of our soldiers would be glad to give up Coca-Cola to get a little more food and clothing into liberated Europe, however painful the sacrifice might be to soda-pop manufacturers.

With all due respect to many humane and thoughtful individual officers, among them men of the highest rank, the fact is that the army has never been too understanding about the civilian relief problem. The military were the nemesis of the carefully worked out European relief requirements of the Inter-Allied Committee under Sir Frederick Leith Ross, which was set up in September, 1941, and worked almost two years with little result. When the President placed Governor Lehman in charge of an Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation in November, 1942, the latter soon found himself stymied by brass-hattism. A year later, when the UNRRA was being established, the military staged a behind-the-scenes coup and obtained a directive from the President giving them responsibility for relief in liberated areas for the first six months after liberation. A war President cannot easily ignore the advice of his generals, but the directive created justified dismay among those who had worked on relief problems with the army in the African invasion.

The UNRRA has many political problems abroad. The richer Western European countries, with gold balances and assets in London and New York, prefer to do their own buying in the hope that they can get more than their share. The poorer Eastern and Central European countries that depend on the UNRRA have been fearful lest food be used as a political weapon. Experience after the last war and more recently in Greece indicates that such fears are not unjustified. The UNRRA is overcoming most of these difficulties. Little attention is paid by the press to its major political headache, which is the United States, where the importance of the relief problem is but imperfectly understood. Ambassador Pearson touched politely on this when he said that some countries are behind in their promised UNRRA appropriations. One of these is the United States. So far Congress has only authorized $450,000,000 of our $1,200,000,000 quota. An additional $350,000,000 was to have been transferred from lend-lease. Each country's appropriation is to be spent for UNRRA supplies within its own borders, and we are even farther behind in terms of supplies than in terms of money authorizations. Ambassador Pearson provided some graphic figures in this field. The UNRRA was supposed to get 400,000,000 pounds of meat during the current six-month period, but only 33,000,000 pounds are available, all of this from Canada.

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The experience of the UNRRA is not without relevance for the forthcoming conference at San Francisco. It shows that in international organizations action is not determined by theoretical voting powers but by whichever nation "has what it takes," whether this be military power or relief supplies. Supplies are in the hands of the Joint Anglo-American Combined Boards on Food, Shipping, Raw Materials, Production, and Resources. And on these boards the United States is distinctly the senior partner since it has most of the available resources. The UNRRA cannot even go direct to the Combined Boards any more. Between the UNRRA and the boards now stands the new inter-agency committee established by War Mobilization Director James F. Byrnes on March 11 to screen all past relief and supply programs and pass on all future ones. FEA Administrator Leo T. Crowley is chairman, but the dominant figures on the committee are Will Clayton of the State Department, General Somervell, and Marvin Jones of the War Food Administration. None of these are likely to be too sympathetic about the relief problem, and all are strongly under the influence of commercial considerations unfavorable to extensive shipments of relief.

The big food interests and their spokesmen within the military procurement services and in the War Food Administration have deliberately pursued a "bare-shelf" policy designed to leave us at the end of the war with as little surplus as possible. The considerations uppermost in the mind of the food industry were indicated by Lee Marshall in a speech last May at the Quartermaster Corps Food Service Show in Cincinnati. Marshall is head of the Continental Baking Company and was then director of distribution for the War Food Administration. He pleaded for greater care in buying food for the army. "This constant readjustment of food supplies to needs is important for at least one paramount reason," Marshall said; "it can very definitely stunt the growth of post-war problems concerning the disposition of government-owned food stocks." It can also stunt a whole generation of children in Allied countries. "You might say," Marshall went on in a burst of frankness, "that we have a selfish interest in keeping stocks as low as practical."

Next to food, the liberated peoples most need clothing; we should be ashamed only to give them our cast-off garments. But the textile industry does not even want to produce low-cost garments for the home market, much less for our allies. I hope to discuss the food and textile problems in more detail in a later letter. The heart of the relief problem is our capacity effectively to mobilize the food and textile industries. And that depends in part on our willingness as a people to pull in our ample belts a little. The Germans starved the peoples of the occupied countries deliberately to strengthen their own future military position in Europe. It is already apparent that we may treat them worse out of sheer carelessness, shortsightedness, and lack of planning. If we do, we weaken our own allies against German revival. If humanity and moral obligation will not move us, let us remember that devastated countries make poor markets, that poverty is contagious in the modern economy, and that pestilence too can spread.

The War Fronts

BY CHARLES G. BOLTE

GENERAL EISENHOWER'S order of last Saturday calling on German troops to surrender summed up the situation within the Reich accurately: "The German government has ceased to exercise effective control over a wide area. The German command has lost effective control over many units, large and small, of the German forces."

The German high command has indeed lost control to such an extent that captured senior officers were still not sure who was their commander in the west, Rundstedt or Kesselring, and even before Eisenhower's order many Germans, both individually and in units, were giving themselves up. Allied armies took 85,000 prisoners in the seventy-two hours ending Saturday afternoon, 34,000 of them on Thursday alone, and on some sectors of what was once the German front between Switzerland and Holland thousands of enemy troops were simply being disarmed and told to walk west without guard.

The collapse of that front was certainly one of the fastest and most complete breakups in military history. Eight days ago—I write on Sunday—the Twenty-first Army Group crossed the Rhine north of the Ruhr in what then seemed the beginning of a large-scale and bitter battle to obtain a bridgehead so that supplies might be built up for a breakout into the flat Westphalian plain leading toward Berlin. To the south the United States First and Third armies were already over the river, but the First was apparently being contained in the Remagen bridgehead and the Third seemed doomed to slow progress in the hills of South Germany. By the beginning of last week, however, it was apparent that the German situation was far gone. Eisenhower had in fact, as he promised, won the Battle of the Rhine on the river's west bank, where the enemy lost a quarter of a million men and became consequently far too weak to hold the long river line.

This in no way detracts from the skill and dash of the Allied performance on the east bank or from the courage of the Allied troops, which met heavy opposition and broke it down. As sheer exercises in the practical handling and rapid supplying of mobile columns Hodges's and Patton's sweeps to the east and then to the north will long be studied in the war colleges—the First Army's tanks advanced from one to one hundred miles in four days. Both generals showed a heartening lack of concern about their exposed flanks as they hurried to drive into Germany and to aid in the envelopment of the Ruhr.

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While these headline gains were registered through the soft center of the western front, Marshal Montgomery's three armies to the north were finding the going much harder. As in Sicily, Normandy, and the Maas-Rhine battle British and Canadian troops pounded at the hinge of the enemy line where it was strongest. In all these actions the cautious, thorough Montgomery and his dogged, hard-working infantry-artillery teams have drawn the unspectacular but vital assignment of grinding away the hinge while Patton's fast tanks pushed through the opening door and swung it back.

By the end of last week the door was off its hinges and in splinters. On Sunday the United States Ninth and First armies joined behind the Ruhr, encircling perhaps 50,000 Germans and cutting off the Wehrmacht's last basic industrial resources. The Germans reported American troops in Kassel and British troops in Münster. A correspondent cabled through Montgomery's security blackout that British and Canadian columns had burst through the last resistance at the northern hinge and were driving north into Holland, northeast toward the Baltic ports, and east over the Westphalian plain. Once again it seemed as if—from Frankfurt to the north at least—lengthening supply lines would offer greater hindrance to the Allied advance than would any coherent German defense. The picture was not so rosy south of Frankfurt. The Germans were fighting hard along the upper Main, around Aschaffenburg, where the United States Seventh and French First Army were heading toward Nürnberg, Austria, and a possible junction with the Russians which would seal off the Nazis' last-ditch "national redoubt." The bulk of the Germans in the west might be "a whipped army," as General Eisenhower had said, but the forces in the south fought with the tenacity and skill of S. S. men.

It is entirely possible that we shall witness a comparatively rapid disintegration of the Germans in the north, while those in the south continue to offer heavy resistance. The fall of the Ruhr in nine days is almost too easy: it suggests that the best enemy troops are in the south prepared to swing back on a line through Württemberg, Bavaria, and Austria. Continued heavy resistance to the large-scale Russian offensive toward Vienna, plus the fact that the Russians apparently value the Vienna drive more highly than that toward Berlin, suggests that a similar decision has been taken by the German command as regards the east.

All this gives rise to the interesting conjecture that we may still have Germans to kill after North Germany and Berlin have fallen into our hands. The historians may thus have to wrestle with the problem of when the European war ended. General Eisenhower has now given official weight to the theory long advanced in these columns and elsewhere that there will never be a formal German surrender but rather a gradual disintegration of the Wehrmacht, with progressively larger units surrendering but with the machinery of the state disappearing so that no one man or power can eventually sign a piece of paper admitting the German nation's capitulation. It is obviously to the Allied interest that Eisenhower be able to issue a statement proclaiming the end of organized German resistance before too many troops get into the "national redoubt"; so that any further resisters can be shot as criminals and the Allies can be relieved of the necessity for another major campaign. On the other hand, it would serve a kind of rough justice if the Nazi leaders and S. S. bully boys slipped away to the south, if the end of organized resistance were proclaimed after the fall of Berlin, and if the southern Nazis were then hunted down and executed in the field.

25 Years Ago in "The Nation"

AT A PRIVATE GATHERING in Paris a year ago Lloyd George was told to his face that the expectation in England, among the Tories, was that he would presently land squarely in the Conservative camp. "They think so, do they?" he replied. "Well, they may find themselves greatly mistaken." But now he has clearly made the jump. —*April 3, 1920.*

THE ALLIED STATESMEN have shoved Hungary over the edge of the civilized world into the dark void of chaos. By indifference and starvation and force of arms, they threw out their friends. With a futile gesture of disapproval they disposed of the Hapsburg Joseph, leaving in power his supporters. Those supporters and their rule of horror the Allies have formally, definitively recognized.—*April 3, 1920.*

MUNICH, FEBRUARY 15.—The political situation in Germany today is so confused that it must be impossible for an outsider to form any conception of it. The political ability and acumen of the Germans are being put to a test now that the people have the power to decide their own fate. . . . The bureaucracy is to a large extent monarchistically inclined and utterly opposed to the existing government. This is one of the sources of weakness of the Ebert regime; it has not been willing to or has been unable to clean house in the departments.—MAX HIRSCHBERG, *April 3, 1920.*

FOR EVERY JACK there is some compliant Jill; from all the plains and valleys the couples scramble up to the difficult ark of matrimony. Sheba travels to Solomon and the event is set down in the Book of Kings. Caesar rules over Rome and Cleopatra over Egypt, but the wet sundering leagues cannot separate them. . . . How then should Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks fail to swing into the orbit calculated from the beginning? . . . In this wedding the royal lines cross. It is as expected and as gratifying as the conclusion of a feature film.—*April 10, 1920.*

NEVER DID WHAT WAS HERALDED as a grand and inspiring cause collapse more completely of its own weight than the movement for universal compulsory military service. Its backers, who were so confident a little while ago that it would easily pass the Senate, did not dare to bring it to a vote in that body.—*April 17, 1920.*

BOOKS OF THE MONTH: Henri Bergson, "Mind and Energy"; Van Wyck Brooks, "The Ordeal of Mark Twain"; James Branch Cabell, "The Cords of Vanity"; Gabriele D'Annunzio, "Tales of My Native Town"; Paul Gauguin, "Noa Noa"; Walter Lippmann, "Liberty and the News"; Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Anti-Christ," translated by H. L. Mencken; Eugene O'Neill, "Beyond the Horizon."

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Lloyd George

BY KINGSLEY MARTIN

London, March 28 (by cable)

I WOULD hesitate to say that Lloyd George was the most brilliant man I've known, but he was among the very few of undoubted genius. Today, with the European war ending, it is a comparison with Winston Churchill that first comes to mind. Lloyd George too led the country to military victory and knew what it was to encounter the bitter resistance of a party machine. If the quality of generous leadership comes out less clearly in him than in Churchill it is because, once installed in office, Churchill was through birth, tradition, and training a military and national chief, while Lloyd George was a man of the people, of peasant stock, and had continuously to fight not only the enemy but also the military and social hierarchy.

His war memoirs are unequaled as a source book for the history of the last war. Written with a vigorous intensity that was his special characteristic, they have as their underlying theme the justification of the Premier in his struggle with Field Marshal Haig.

At the end of the book a critic asks why, if our generals were as bad as that, Lloyd George didn't get rid of them. He would have replied that as a civilian with a pacifist record in the Boer War he couldn't risk an all-out open struggle with the military hierarchy. He would have added that he only held his position by his own dexterity and capacity, and he would have recalled that in the period immediately before the war he was bitterly hated by all the propertied class and during his fight to tax the landlords and curb the power of the House of Lords was regarded as the most dangerous radical who ever reached power.

That he had in him the same qualities of courage, tenacity, and leadership which Winston Churchill has displayed no one will deny. On one occasion, which his biographer will some day describe in full, at the end of March, 1918, he pulled the British Cabinet through its darkest hour as Churchill did in 1940. The Germans were nearing Paris and Calais, and some of the members of the Cabinet went to him in despair. They arrived to find Lloyd George singing a Welsh hymn about the Valley of the Shadow, with Smuts, likewise a peasant and a religious man, joining in. He went on to deliver a short speech which invigorated and united the Cabinet.

Lloyd George was the first man of the people who ever reached the highest post in Britain.

A Welsh solicitor, he first became known for defending the right of dissenters to be buried in consecrated ground even against the will of an Anglican parson. He was the natural champion of the nonconformist middle class against the landlords, the church, and the aristocracy. In the House of Commons he fought brilliantly for education, free trade, and the taxation of the rich. He, more than anyone else, was responsible for making the state accept the duty of public welfare. To this day you may hear working people describe their health-insurance benefit as "my Lloyd George." At the outbreak of the First World War, which he supported only after the invasion of Belgium, he stood as the chief champion of the small man. Why was it, then, that after the war he lost power and never again held office?

The complex reasons may be summarized by saying that his judgment was far less sure in the years immediately after the war, and the Tories took the first opportunity of ridding themselves of a leadership they had always detested; that Lloyd George was responsible for splitting the Liberal Party, which would have decayed in any case with the rise of Labor but which need not have fallen into rapid and total disaster; that he was unable to join the Labor Party mainly because he had won the undying distrust of Labor, which attributed to him many of the evils of Versailles and the economic miseries that followed it. The prewar wizard came to be regarded as totally untrustworthy. Above all, his broken promise to the miners who trusted him to carry out the nationalization proposals of the Sankey Report and his share in the period of the Black-and-Tans in Ireland made people forget the great credit due him for the Irish settlement.

Though Winston Churchill was rightly regarded as the main force making for war with the newly formed Soviet Union, and Lloyd George in fact always opposed intervention in Russia, Labor blamed the Premier for our anti-Soviet policy and attributed to him far more than his share of blame for Versailles. In fact Lloyd George fought with much dexterity against many of the worst provisions of the settlement. But Labor was right in regarding as unworthy his conduct in the 1918 election, when unnecessarily he allowed himself to be stampeded by the ballyhoo of the press lords. So it came about that, feared by the Tories and distrusted by Labor, the ablest politician and executive in England was left with the funds of the Liberal Party but no party machine behind him. Without a party following, a member of Parliament, even if he has been Prime Minister, can seldom attain office.

Lloyd George had a dazzling personality and unequaled charm which worked even with his enemies. Those who called to curse often left with benedictions; those who called to resign came away flattered, wreathed in smiles, only to discover later that their grievance was unremedied. Partly it was his golden voice, flexible, friendly, and disarming; partly it was his lightning quickness of perception, what Lord Keynes called his sixth sense. He was a superb negotiator, and no one has ever had his capacity for gauging intuitively the feeling of a meeting. He could rise on occasions to the very highest peaks of oratory. Introducing visual images, sometimes flamboyant and sometimes comic—one thinks of his perorations about Welsh mountains and his famous description of City magnates as penguins—his

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speeches were not in the classical form and were much better to hear than to read. Their effect came from gesture, intonation, and the sudden unexpected parenthesis. He had, moreover, the rare gift of being able to speak with such intimacy to a ragged House of Commons that every member felt his words were addressed individually to him. In common with others who have been political opponents of Lloyd George, I was never able to dislike him after I met him. He was a superb raconteur and never in the least bitter about his exile from office.

Lloyd George wasn't unhappy during the last twenty years of his life. Indeed, I'm not sure that he was prouder of anything in his career than of the long series of memoirs or, even more important, of his extraordinary achievement as a farmer. I used to go periodically to Churt, where he had turned a huge sandy area which naturally grew little but heather and pine trees into one of the most profitable farms in Britain. He imported from the Aldershot barracks many tons of manure; I remember his remark that it was the only use he ever had for cavalry. And he was immensely and rightly proud of his show crop of fruit and vegetables. They were very pleasant, familiar visits to a man who lived with the personal simplicity of the peasantry from which he sprang.

It is one of the tragedies of British history that this man of unique quality should have been diverted from political leadership at a period when we so sorely lacked leaders. The history of England might have been different if MacDonald and Lloyd George had been friends and had jointly led a radical government capable of carrying on and extending the work of social reform which Lloyd George began in his great days before 1914.

Is This "Peace in Our Time"?

BY REINHOLD NIEBUHR

AMERICAN progressives and liberals have wisely decided to accept, and to work for, the adoption of the Dumbarton Oaks and Yalta international agreements in basic outline. In doing so they are exposing themselves to the criticism of purer internationalists, who continue to express the principles of a more consistent constitutional approach to international issues. Those principles were once the creed of the whole democratic international movement in this country. The British, in fact, used to criticize American internationalist thought because it proposed to create an international authority by pure constitutional means instead of by a more organic process. They believed that the unity of the international community must be achieved by the coalescence of national forces, a process analogous to the growth of the British Commonwealth, rather than by a process analogous to the establishment of the League of Nations.

The decision to support Dumbarton Oaks and Yalta is based on the view that it is safer to try to extend the core of world community created by the war partnership of the great powers than to attempt the constitution of a world authority above and beyond the sovereignty of the great powers. Critics of this position assert that American internationalism has capitulated to expediency and has forsaken principle, that it supports a system of power politics rather than international justice, and that it is preparing another "Munich," this time to appease Russia (here the internationalists join hands with the nationalist critics of our foreign policy).

While the majority of American liberals have taken a thoroughly sound position, their defense of it has been weak, and their efforts to improve the Dumbarton Oaks agreement have been ineffective. To say that we must accept an imperfect peace in an imperfect world is not an adequate defense. Nor would the Dumbarton Oaks agreement be substantially improved by the insertion of some international bill of rights which has no relevance, and would have no efficacy, in a world alliance of states.

Let us admit more freely that Dumbarton Oaks envisages, not a world authority, but a world alliance of states, and that the authority of the great powers is to be the core of world order. Let us admit the perils of this procedure. The great powers may try to hold the world together merely by their force. They may not mete out sufficient justice to the small powers to make the peace sufferable. They may not build the mutual trust necessary to create the central core of international stability which the plan intends. We must not deny that a peace secured through preponderant power may not deal adequately with all the economic and social relations of the nations, that it may center its attention too much upon the final suppression of aggression. And we must not deny that when preponderant power has been established through the cooperation of several great nations, whose partnership is still very tentative and incomplete, divisions may develop which would wreck the instrument of order. We ought not to deny these things even though our apprehensions may be overheard by the cynics and nationalists who are ready to use any argument to asperse a plan placing a check upon the power and self-will of our own nation.

Let us confess these apprehensions and then state clearly why we still hold resolutely to the basic outline of the Dumbarton Oaks agreement. We do so because we know, or dimly sense, what our critics do not admit. We know that decisions of nations may perfect and amend, but not reverse, the main currents of history. We know that modern technical warfare has made strong nations stronger and weak nations weaker. We may not like this tendency, but it is part of the general historical pattern; modern technics centralize power in both national and international life, in both the economic and the military realm. Our whole program for achieving a future international community

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requires that we make this inexorable tendency of a technical civilization serve the ends of justice. This is a desperately difficult task. It cannot be accomplished at all if we attempt to defy the process. The present plan for international order undoubtedly makes concessions to the pride and power of the great nations. It qualifies the sovereignty of nations which have already lost some of their sovereignty through the historical process. It qualifies the sovereignty of the great powers only in so far as their mutual agreements place restraints upon their self-will and oblige them, in order to maintain these agreements, to draw the smaller powers further and further into them.

If we accept such a system, despite its dangers, it is because we see no better alternatives within reach. There are undoubtedly many ways of perfecting the proposed agreement. But there are no better alternatives in terms of basic principles. The defects of the present system are not derived from the inadequacy of this or that statesman or the recalcitrance of this or that nation. They are derived from the fact that nations can do only what is implicit in the historical process in which they are involved. Nations cannot create a new universal sovereignty above themselves by a pure fiat of will and then turn around and subject themselves to this sovereignty. Individual idealists can of course envisage such a procedure. But the traditions and habits, the collective instincts and impulses of the nations run counter to the ideal concept.

We need only analyze the impulses of our own nation to perceive the impossibility of a pure constitutional solution of the international problem: we have given the world one example of national schizophrenia. After the last war American idealists contrived a constitutional solution, but it was sabotaged by American cynics, nationalists, and realists. Whatever may be the defects of our present foreign policy, Roosevelt must be given great credit for having avoided a new display of this kind of political immaturity.

It is true of course that Russia seems particularly intent upon establishing a system of unilateral security and that its hegemony in Eastern Europe may threaten the stability of a mutual system. But even so its policy differs in degree rather than in kind from that of the other great powers. Let those of our critics who insist that we are dealing not with "one world" but with "two worlds" state their alternatives clearly. Do they want to prepare for the next war between Russia and the West? Dumbarton Oaks is different from Munich because Russia is different from Germany. Russia is not driven by the mania of world conquest, though it obviously has residual fears of the Western world. Shall we seek to quiet those fears by efforts to achieve a mutual-security system, or shall we play upon those fears and make another war inevitable? Is it not quite clear that our idealist critics are offering us nothing but another war under the guise of an unattainable purer constitutional system? The cynical and nationalist critics offer it without any disguise. That is what they want.

We do not show ourselves to be cowardly compromisers with "power politics" or mere exponents of expediency in working for the acceptance of the present plans in basic outline. We advocate those plans because we have some understanding of the processes of history and are not willing to be led into another war by the mirage of a perfect international society of democratic socialist republics.

On the other hand, there are possibilities of improving the Dumbarton Oaks plan which we are not exploiting to the full. Many of our criticisms betray our old abstract notions, not yet completely disavowed. The organization "Americans United," for instance, which is effectively marshaling American opinion in support of Dumbarton Oaks, believes that the most important amendment to the charter should be a "provision for the establishment of a commission on human rights and fundamental freedoms." The same proposal is made by the Federal Council of Churches. It assumes that we have in fact an international government, when we have only a world alliance. If our own national government is unable to establish certain human rights in some of our states in opposition to the prejudices and traditions of the local communities, it will hardly be possible for a new-born world alliance to enforce particular ideals of freedom upon all its members. National sovereignty will not be sufficiently abridged to make such enforcement possible.

Our efforts to improve Dumbarton Oaks ought to be much more within the framework of the plan. The recent demands of Russia and our own country for three votes each in the General Assembly seem quite unjustified in view of the equal authority of the great powers in the Security Council and the already heavy preponderance of power of the Security Council over the General Assembly. On this issue the combined criticism and pressure of the smaller powers and of democratic opinion within the great powers may well effect basic changes in the charter. The General Assembly in which the smaller powers will express themselves must be given and will undoubtedly obtain greater authority. It is particularly important that military strategy be not left completely in the hands of the great powers.

Though a complete constitutional system is not possible, more elements of constitutional justice are possible within the framework of the charter. The social and economic council, for instance, is in its present outline too much a welfare organization. This council must become an international agency for administering and completing trade and monetary and credit agreements, such as the Bretton Woods accord, if real substance is to be given to a United Nations partnership.

The contemplated treatment of the vanquished nations is vaguely defined, and present proposals contain contradictory objectives which reveal the failure of the great powers to reach real agreement on how the continents are to be organized. The West does not know what to do with Germany politically or economically because it has no real plan for Europe. Russia knows what it would like to do with Germany. It does not want to destroy German industries but to use them. It does not want to destroy Germany politically but to keep it in subjection. The Yalta agreement suggests that we have not resolved these contradictions but merely piled one proposal on top of the other so that we shall try both to destroy Germany and to make it yield reparations.

The contradictory purposes of the Allies can only be resolved through more complete forms of partnership; and these cannot be made effective without drawing the smaller

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powers into them more fully. In that sense, if the international problem is solved at all, the method of solution will tend to mitigate both of the present dangers—the danger of dissension among the great powers and the danger of injustice to the small powers.

It is not at all certain that the agreement achieved will yield to historic improvement. This may be only "peace in our time." But unlike Mr. Chamberlain's peace it is not foredoomed to failure. It has a fighting chance of success. And the alternatives have no hope of success at all.

Bill White's Bazooka

BY ALEXANDER KENDRICK

[*Mr. Kendrick was Moscow correspondent of the Philadelphia* Inquirer *until last October, when he returned to the United States in protest against "the refusal of the Soviet government to afford adequate, reasonable facilities for war coverage." He is now the* Inquirer's *Washington correspondent.*]

LAST of seventeen "Roving Editors" listed on the masthead of the *Reader's Digest* is W. L. White. For a long time Bill White wanted to get to Russia, but he discovered to his chagrin that the *Digest* did not provide credentials that satisfied the Soviet authorities to whom he applied for a visa. He appealed for help to several persons supposedly "close to the Russians" in this country, but to no avail. At last he invited Eric Johnston to take him along on his trip to Russia as president of the United States Chamber of Commerce. As a member of Johnston's party he could hardly be refused a visa. But he was still the *Reader's Digest's* "roving editor," as he announced quite frankly to the regular American correspondents when he arrived in Moscow.

I was in the Soviet Union when Bill White arrived, and I was there when he left. I shared with him the experience of being bombed by German planes at the American airfield in the Ukraine. I base the following criticism of his book, "Report on the Russians," either on my own knowledge of his thirty-day stay or on the statements of two other American correspondents who made the Urals trip with him.

There seems to be no point at this stage in citing the dozens of errors in names and facts that appear in his report. In the book version he admits a number and corrects them. Through the *Digest* version the errors had already been circulated among its millions of readers, and nothing could be done to retrieve them. Again it is not very important, except as throwing a light on his own scale of values in war time, that White found all Russians shabby, grim, and solemn; that he observed they did not smile ("I suddenly remember that neither do the Prussians"); that Moscow streets are "incredibly empty" and have dingy shops and "dilapidated buildings"; that Soviet factories are dirty and slow-moving.

This is trivial stuff—deceptively trivial. But it leads slyly into his central thesis: that a socialist society is a poor and tawdry affair in contrast with a capitalist society. It lacks competition and incentive. Its citizens are inefficient, drab, sheeplike. White is irked that Johnston is not more vigorous in his pro-capitalist utterances, that he even talks about doing business with Russia after the war. And behind the outward contempt is fear, fear that socialism in Russia is not failing but succeeding, that it challenges Western capitalism in spite of our shiny bathrooms and clean streets.

Viewed objectively, therefore, the book is less a report on the Russians than on a state of mind toward the Russians. It is a political document rather than a literary work. Its appearance in the *Reader's Digest* and its wide distribution through this medium in the United States and Latin America must be regarded as political warfare aimed at undermining the whole idea of world security through cooperation and mutual trust.

The little errors play their part. (Most good reporters check before they commit themselves in final copy.) The choice of adjectives, the interpretation of incidents contribute to the total picture that is built up. But in addition to inaccuracy and conscious "angling" it is necessary to report that White has resorted to pure invention.

Here are two incidents in which White has summed up his most venomous appraisals of Soviet society. Both are presented as fact. Both are fiction.

He describes a meeting with two American engineers working in the Soviet Union, salt-of-the-earth characters named Tex and Ed. He bumps into them at the Omsk airport, where they are waiting for a plane. For ten pages they tell him what is wrong with the damned country—lack of home life, promiscuity, barbarism, constant surveillance, heartlessness, and kindred items. He sets all this down in the readable dialogue form he used in "They Were Expendable." Later, when he returned to this country, he was questioned about the incident by correspondents who were with him on the Urals trip and who had somehow failed to see Tex and Ed. White then admitted that he had invented it. His story was based on a meeting he had had with two engineers in Casablanca when he was on his way to Russia. He thought it better for the purposes of the book to put the meeting in Omsk.

The second invention is much more malicious and scandalous. Early in the book White introduces an American correspondent whom he nicknames the Field Marshal. The man is easily identifiable. Later in his account of a party given by the city officials of Novosibirsk this same man crops up. He is drunk and covets a pretty brunette waitress. He goes over to the secretary of the Communist Party in Siberia, places his arm about the latter's shoulder, and makes known his wants. The party secretary nods agreement, and the next scene shows a NKVO man forcibly leading the protesting girl upstairs to the Field Marshal's room. Luckily for her, the Field Marshal is too drunk to entertain.

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Now, the American correspondents on the trip say that the Field Marshal was not one of their party and that the incident did not occur in any shape or form.

White does a distinct disservice to his newspaper colleagues on two other counts. First, he quotes some of their disparaging remarks about Russia completely out of context, and since he names them by name, he impugns their professional standing as competent reporters. Second, he recites their bill of grievances against the Soviet censorship and then demolishes their excellent case by writing a book which in Russian eyes is proof that American newspapermen can't be trusted. Moreover, he cuts the ground from under the valid and constructive criticism of the Soviet Union which many of us have offered and which eventually should have led to better understanding. Soviet censorship has been too drastic. Soviet officials have failed to dispel suspicion of the foreigner; they have had an exaggerated concern for security and have been unduly secretive about military and government policy. Bill White has not helped to improve this situation. The task of Americans inside Russia is vastly harder than it was before White's jaunty arrival last June.

One important footnote must be interjected to account for White's slant. Finland rides on his back like the old man of the sea. He makes it plain to the Soviet vice-consul taking his visa application that he was a reporter on the Finnish side during the late mutual unpleasantness and chuckles at the vice-consul's decision that in the Finnish war White's opposition to the Soviet Union was "purely verbal." But he fails to report that when he arrived in Moscow he told correspondents that, psychologically speaking, he was still on the other side of the Finnish-Soviet frontier.

Bill White enjoys most of his present reputation because in "They Were Expendable" he was able to put down what people told him dramatically and well. In "Report on the Russians" he uses the same literary technique. It would be difficult to analyze a complicated, prejudice-ridden subject like Russia by such a method even if the reporter were unprejudiced himself. White is not in this category.

Among those getting ready to convert from war to peace are the people who hate Russia. During the war-time alliance they have dropped their previous "I like Russia, but—." Now they watch the clock for the time when the Russian armies will no longer be needed, for the time when they can open what may turn out to be the most virulent anti-Soviet campaign in history. Bill White has jumped the gun on the clock-watchers. But the others are wasting no time. They are reaching out gratefully for White's custom-built bazooka —an excellent weapon for the dirty in-fighters of political warfare.

Unseat the Poll-Taxers!

BY J. MITCHELL MORSE

FIRST the Georgia legislature voted three to one to keep the poll tax; then it voted three to one for repeal. One thing that helped it change its mind was a telegram to Governor Arnall promising that if the tax were repealed a campaign to unseat Georgia's ten Congressmen would be dropped. The telegram was signed by Arthur Dunn of New York, counsel to the Southern Electoral Reform League, on behalf of Moss A. Plunkett of Roanoke, Virginia, president of the league. This organization of liberal Southerners is continuing a campaign against the sixty-nine Representatives from the seven remaining poll-tax states. It has formally notified them of intention to contest their election, and has presented more than a thousand pages of evidence to the House Elections Committee to show that their election was unconstitutional. The last of the law's delays will run out toward the middle of May, and the sixty-nine must then appear before the committee and show cause why they should not be unseated. They have not yet presented any evidence in their own behalf. Their time for doing so will expire about April 7—the date is indefinite because the sixty-nine replied to the notice of contest at different times; after that they will have thirty days in which to prepare briefs, and then they must stand trial, evidence or no evidence, briefs or no briefs.

According to the letter of the law their situation is desperate, but all the human factors are on their side. The Elections Committee is divided into three sections to facilitate its work; the chairman of the first section is Thomas G. Abernethy of Mississippi, one of the accused; the chairman of the second section is Ed Gossett of Texas, one of the accused; the chairman of the third section is Hugh Peterson of Georgia, who was originally one of the accused. Of the other members of the committee, three are among the accused and eleven are Republicans; only eight are Democrats from non-poll-tax states. In few actions are the accused so well represented on the bench.

However, there is good constitutional ground for contesting the seats of poll-tax Representatives. The Fourteenth Amendment is known chiefly as the dull matrix of that many-faceted diamond the "due-process" clause, but it contains other diamonds also, among them this one discovered by Mr. Dunn:

> . . . when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a state, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such state, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein [i.e., in Congress] shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such state.*

* The word "male" was made superfluous by the Nineteenth Amendment, but has been allowed to stand.

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After the decennial census of 1940 the Seventy-seventh Congress was required by the same amendment to determine the number of Representatives to which each state was entitled by its population. This it did. It allotted nine to Alabama, seven to Arkansas, seven to Mississippi, six to South Carolina, ten to Tennessee, twenty-one to Texas, and nine to Virginia. In all these states payment of a poll tax is a prerequisite for voting. The following table shows the average percentages of possible voters who actually voted in the last three elections:

	Poll-Tax States	*Non-Poll-Tax States*
1940	23 per cent	73 per cent
1942	5 " "	39 " "
1944	21 " "	60 " "

Such figures, says the Southern Electoral Reform League, indicate that the poll tax abridges the right to vote. As a matter of fact, when the Virginia tax was provided for at the state constitutional convention of 1901, Senator Carter Glass was very frank about its undemocratic purpose:

> The chief purpose of this convention is to amend the suffrage clause of the existing constitution. It does not require much prescience to foretell that the alterations which we shall make will not apply to "all persons and classes without distinction." We were sent here to make distinctions. We expect to make distinctions. We will make distinctions.

In 1939 the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals held that the poll tax was primarily intended, not to produce revenue, but to limit the suffrage (*Campbell* v. *Goode,* 172 Va. 463, 2 S.E. (2d) 456).

If the penalty were enforced, the seven poll-tax states would be entitled to only twenty-three Representatives instead of sixty-nine. Their legislatures would have to call special elections, either redistricting the states to make a smaller number of districts or providing for the election of all their Representatives at large.

There doesn't seem to be much chance that the Elections Committee will go so far to uphold the Constitution. One Congressman told Dunn, "We're like a club up here in matters of this kind, so I think your contest is going to die in committee." Dunn replied that it was "a matter of the Constitution against Congressional courtesy." Representative Woodrum of Virginia, who favors repeal of the poll tax, told Dunn that it could be achieved only by public pressure. Dunn and Plunkett believe their action may be effective in creating pressure for a federal anti-poll-tax law.

The idea of enforcing the penalty provided in the Fourteenth Amendment was first put forth by Dunn in a book "Arithmetic or Revolution?" published in 1934. Carter Glass's newspaper, the Lynchburg, Virginia, *Daily Advance,* once called the seventy-two-year-old Dunn a "carpetbagger," which shows what century it lives in, but as a matter of fact his mother was a Virginia slaveholder and a relative of Governor Henry Alexander Wise, who refused to reprieve John Brown. Dunn himself was, if anything, more conservative than Glass until 1933. He studied economics at Princeton, accepting as eternal laws of nature the pre-machine-age theories of Adam Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo. After graduation he became a corporation lawyer with offices at 25 Broad Street, across the street from the New York Stock Exchange. His social views were just what you would expect: he voted for Herbert Hoover against Al Smith and against Roosevelt —in fact, the only time he deviated from the straight G. O. P. line was in 1912, when he voted for Theodore Roosevelt as a Progressive.

It took an almost fatal accident to make him a Democrat. On December 21, 1931, he was knocked down by an automobile and injured so severely that it took him five years to recover. He didn't set foot in the financial district for three years. The depression was in full career; the casualty company in which he was insured, one of the largest in the country, paid him $2,500 in settlement of a $5,000 policy; a friend, the president of an even larger firm, told him there wasn't a solvent insurance company in the United States; his three sons, all Princeton graduates, all intelligent young men, were all unemployed; two of them voted the Socialist ticket in 1932. Thus Dunn, who had always been an employer, saw the depression as if through the eyes of a man out of work. The corporation lawyer began for the first time to doubt that Adam Smith was the Messiah. On May 31, 1934, following doctor's orders, he started out on a leisurely automobile trip that lasted two and a half years, covered 42,000 miles, and took him through forty-four states and a part of Canada. He had no time-table, no fixed itinerary; he stopped wherever he felt like it, staying sometimes a day, sometimes a week, looking around and asking questions. He saw the New Deal at work, and was converted.

He began to write down his impressions, and a conversation with a newspaper editor led to the production of a daily column, "The Compass," which eventually was syndicated to seventy papers. This continued until the fall of 1936, when he came out for Roosevelt. When that happened, 90 per cent of the newspapers dropped his column and Dunn discontinued it. By that time he was back in New York and had resumed his law practice, which he still continues. In 1944 he organized the Parents and Wives of Fighting Americans, Inc., to agitate for a quick federal ballot for service men; it has since developed a broad liberal program and is now an ally of the Southern Electoral Reform League in the fight against the poll tax.

Moss Plunkett, president of the Southern Electoral Reform League, must be equally incomprehensible to those who think of reformers in the terms of a J. N. Darling cartoon. His family has been in Virginia for three hundred years, slaveholders, Revolutionary patriots, and Confederate patriots. He himself saw action at Chateau Thierry, Belleau Wood, and St. Mihiel. Yet he works for progressive causes! It was largely due to his efforts that the Virginia legislature last year provided funds to double the salaries of grammar-school and high-school teachers in the state, which then averaged $14 a week.

Dunn and Plunkett are not alone in their fight. They have the active support of the National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the C. I. O. But they are cheered most of all by the fact that a number of youth organizations, on their own initiative, are conducting a campaign to have their members' parents write a million letters to Congress.

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India Looks Beyond the War

BY B. SHIVA RAO

I HAVE found people in America under the impression that once peace, disrupted by the political upheaval of 1942, has been restored in India there will be no cause for anxiety about the future. They fail to consider, however, the new factor which will be introduced into the political situation by the demobilization of the army. Two and a half million Indian troops will be looking for employment after the war. During their years in the army they have learned the use of arms, absorbed the virtue of discipline, and realized the effectiveness of common action combined with resourceful leadership. More than that, they have come to regard themselves as the equal of the best Allied troops, having surpassed all expectations in every theater of war. These qualities will make them formidable challengers of the peace unless they obtain employment which will assure them the standard of living to which they have become accustomed in the army. The old type of Indian soldier, the picturesque and loyal sepoy admitting without question the right of every white man to give him orders, no longer exists. Nor can the British follow any longer the old policy, adopted after the great Indian uprising of 1857, of preventing the growth of national sentiment in the army.

Today India is kept under firm control by means of a great number of ordinances which have been promulgated by the Viceroy without consultation with either the executive or the legislature. More than three hundred of these decrees have been issued since 1939 and given the validity of laws, though they have no legislative sanction behind them. Mr. Amery, in his first speech in the House of Commons after assuming charge of the India office in the summer of 1940, gave an assurance to Parliament that the peace-time provision limiting the life of an ordinance to six months was being dropped for the purpose of enforcing military discipline and the conscription of British residents in India. By a singular accident this vital passage did not appear in the reports of the speech published in the Indian press at the time and was only discovered three years later by an Indian legislator studying parliamentary debates.

It is the same story in the provinces. In five of the biggest provinces, where the Congress Party held office until the outbreak of the war, the governors are virtually dictators, with a few officials, mostly British, acting as advisers. The legislatures have not been summoned for more than five years, and public meetings cannot be held without permission of the executive. The experience of provinces where "popular" governments are still supposed to function has been scarcely different. In Bengal, during the critical days preceding the famine, the governor frequently conveyed orders to his officials without even informing the Cabinet. So drunk with power has the executive become in India that practically all the high courts and the federal court have from time to time recorded their sharp disapproval of its acts. In a number of provinces, police officers have had to answer charges of contempt of court.

In a total war in which any information may be held to be "of value to the enemy," censorship is a handy instrument for dealing with embarrassing reports. For months in the early part of 1943 cable messages intended for publication abroad could not refer to "famine" or "epidemics" in India. Not only ordinary journalists but even Mr. Amery has had to bow to the superior wisdom of the censors. When President Roosevelt made an important speech in Washington in February, 1943, the seemingly complete text appeared in the Indian press on the following day. Only weeks later, when the New York *Times* reached India, was it discovered that a passage interpreting the Atlantic Charter as of universal application had been omitted from the cabled reports of the speech.

The war is offered as the excuse for many things in India. It seems the more fantastic, therefore, that Nehru, the greatest anti-Axis force in Asia, should have been in prison for the greater part of this war, and that his party, which, from the time of the Japanese aggression in Manchuria, through all the humiliations of Abyssinia, Spain, Czechoslovakia, right up to Munich, has consistently pointed out the danger of appeasement to world peace, should be labeled defeatist and opportunist.

Worse things have been said about Gandhi. He is of course a pacifist, with a faith in his creed which no world tragedy can shake. But the discussion of the technique of non-violent resistance to the Japanese in the spring of 1942 did not start with him. A month before the arrival of Sir Stafford Cripps in Delhi the deputy chief of the British General Staff declared at a press conference, over the air, and again in a Rotary Club speech that it would not be possible to prevent the Japanese from landing in certain parts of India and that the army looked to the civilian population to delay and hamper enemy operations in the best way it could. Gandhi's crime was that he reproduced the statement in his paper, *Harijan*, and commented on it from the point of view of a non-violent resister.

Gandhi is seventy-four and cannot live much longer. It has suited his critics to discredit him and his creed of non-violence. They seem to forget the value of his influence in checking the terrorist movement in Bengal immediately after the last war; they are blind to the stupendous forces that will be released at the end of this war. With Gandhi will disappear the principles which have inspired India's political life in the interval between the two wars.

The official bureaucracy in India, adept at drawing up plans and reports but at nothing else, has imposing reconstruction schemes ready for the post-war period. But who

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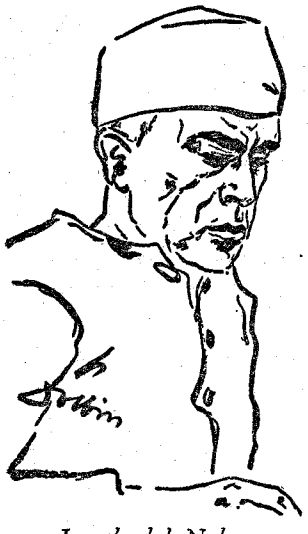
will carry them out? The men who might succeed in setting a pace for India's social and economic program that would satisfy the impatient masses, groaning under prohibitive high prices, are languishing in prison. The administrative machine in India today is run by landlords and capitalists and their supporters. The Bengal famine of 1943 alone is enough to condemn them as a self-seeking, visionless, unrepresentative set of men, unworthy of respect or confidence.

The impression one gets of India from within is very different from the optimistic view that prevails in this country. On the one hand there is a piling up of discontents—political, economic, and racial—awaiting only a suitable opportunity for a massive outburst. On the other hand there is an inert and reactionary upper class blindly imagining that ordinances, censorship, British troops, and all the other war-time expedients for maintaining law and order can be carried into the post-war world. It is not difficult to foresee a head-on clash between these two sets of forces. In visualizing such a situation one must consider the role that will be played by the demobilized Indian soldiers, the organized industrial workers, and the thousands of political (now underground) "absconders," as well as the effect on the masses of the disappearance of the restraints associated with Gandhi's creed, restraints which marked past civil-disobedience movements.



Jawaharlal Nehru

As a political weapon for winning India's freedom nonviolence attracted thousands of votaries, despite the grave provocation of the Amritsar massacre immediately after the last war. But the experiences of the past twenty-five years have brought disillusionment to the vast majority of Gandhi's followers. The new generation in India does not feel bound by his principles. Large numbers have died in detention or, after release, of illnesses caused by detention. It is a mistake to think that treatment of political prisoners in India, especially of the rank and file, has been of the same kind as the much-advertised "Aga Khan palace" conditions provided for Gandhi and the members of the Congress Working Committee. Those who have survived the ordeal of prison life—the harsh treatment by the police, the bad food, even in some cases solitary confinement in underground cells or Delhi's red fort—are not demoralized; they are only waiting for a favorable opportunity to resume the struggle. But not in Gandhi's way!

Under existing circumstances the consequences of a clash can only be large-scale civil strife, which the authorities must attempt to control by martial law or something very like it, or the kind of order that the landlords, capitalists, and autocratic princes would like to see established permanently in India. In short, the choice is between revolution and dictatorship.

There is perhaps one way out of this increasingly perilous situation. The forces which want rapid progress must come together under Nehru's leadership; then India's freedom will have a sound democratic foundation, and in the post-war world India can throw its entire weight on the side of a lasting peace. Nehru's last words to me on the eve of his arrest in August, 1942, were, "It would be dishonorable betrayal of the Allied cause for India to think of a separate peace with any of the Axis powers; we stand not only for our freedom, but for that of Burma, Malaya, and the other Japanese-occupied areas in Asia." If Nehru were to be at San Francisco, he would strike that note and reflect the views of the six hundred million people of southeastern Asia. But what significance can an Indian delegation have that has been selected by Lord Wavell and speaks according to a brief prepared by the British Foreign Office?

Indo-British relations seem to be marked by a curious fatality. In 1942 the Cripps mission had an unequaled opportunity to obtain a settlement; it failed because the Churchill Cabinet and Lord Linlithgow would not indorse the interpretation originally placed on the offer by Sir Stafford. Today a settlement seems considerably more difficult. After the war it may become impossible—except after a long struggle.

What India wants above all things is, first, a change in its external status, which today is that of a political dependency. Nothing arouses such universal and deep resentment as the enforced compliance of India's delegations at world conferences in the decisions of their British masters. The white man's prestige in Asia has been destroyed in this war, and it will not be restored by the old-fashioned conceptions of the Kipling generation.

After it has been recognized as an equal among the world's major powers, India will want to settle down to a period of social and economic progress, which will be possible only under the leadership of a radical like Nehru. Its problems demand a completely new approach, one inspired predominantly by a consideration of the welfare of the masses, not, as hitherto, by regard for the convenience of landlords, princes, and the wealthier classes which have grown up under British rule. Internationally it will exercise all its influence to end colonial rule and to hasten the emergence of other peoples from subjection to imperialist powers. The future peace of the world cannot be guaranteed by pacts and creeds which lack moral sanction. Aggression from without will be met by a timely demonstration of adequate force. The foundation on which imperial authority in Asia has been built, the submissiveness of the colonial peoples, has been destroyed forever.

These things need to be understood in America, for it is easy to misrepresent the struggles and aspirations of far-off people like those in India. Ours is an essentially human problem; it concerns the health, the education, and the feeding of four hundred million people. Nothing else matters in India in comparison with this, and no one on the outside can solve it for us. Our own leaders, commanding the confidence of the Indian masses and the sympathy and support of democratic and progressive forces throughout the world, can lead India through the difficult post-war years to a new conception of its responsibilities as one of the guardians of peace in Asia.

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Behind the Enemy Line

BY ARGUS

FORMER wars almost without exception have come to an end in three sharply defined stages. First the fighting has stopped. Then the treaties have been drawn up—in full knowledge of the general situation, exactly counterbalancing conditions of peace have been worked out. Finally, in full knowledge of the general settlement, a start has been made toward carrying out these conditions.

In this war these three final stages have merged. While the world is still shrouded in the smoke of battle, various resolutions—erratic, scattered, vague—are being formulated about the post-war order. And even if such resolutions were lacking, there would still be countless *faits accomplis* to shape the post-war world. At the same time it is becoming clearer every moment how uncertain, until the very last day, will be the basis for decision. The farther the Allied armies drive into Germany the more plainly we see that the war is going to end under markedly different circumstances from those envisaged a year ago.

The Allied governments have announced the three fundamental principles by which their treatment of Germany will be governed. The first is military: Germany shall be rendered completely incapable of waging another war. The second is economic: Germany shall make compensation for the damage it has done, but it shall be left capable of working back gradually to a decent standard of living. The third is political: Germany shall, if it is at all possible, be made into a democracy.

Conditions in Germany, however, as they are being revealed at this stage of the war, make the application of these principles a different matter from that formerly contemplated. The military potential of the Reich will have been destroyed to a degree that was not foreseen some months ago. The Nazis themselves have been the ones who have most thoroughly and most savagely disarmed their country. If there have been people in Germany who during World War I have thought of preparing for World War II, the Nazis obviously have not been among them. If they had been planning a third world war they would have acted as General Ludendorff and Prince Max von Baden did in 1918. As soon as the war became hopeless they would have capitulated, in order to save as much of their strength as possible for another attempt. The Nazis have done just the opposite. Although the war has been hopeless for months they have fought on in a suicidal orgy until all sources of national power have undergone such physical destruction as no country has known for centuries. That is the difference between 1918 and today. Germany's capacity to wage war was temporarily exhausted in 1918, but its inherent war potential was not really affected. Given a period of recuperation and a good opportunity, it could begin the whole thing over again. Today even its war potential has been largely destroyed.

Viewed realistically, this means that the first of the three fundamental purposes of the Allies, the military, is no longer difficult of attainment. The problem now is not how much and what shall be demolished in the Reich but how much and what the Germans shall be allowed to rebuild. In other words, a very small amount of supervision can insure the military impotence of the Reich for any desired length of time, certainly for a longer time than any political calculation can take into account. A much smaller occupation force will suffice than had been supposed necessary, and its task will be much less difficult than the more timid had feared. Moreover, a number of other measures that were justified only as insurance against future German aggression will be superflous. Future German aggression has been ruled out by the Nazis' suicidal orgies. A few supplemental restrictions will be all that is needed to perpetuate this achievement of theirs —the only one that will outlive them.

The tremendous devastation in Germany will also affect the application of the fundamental economic principle proclaimed by the Allies. The hope of finding in the German ruins a great quantity of goods which the victim countries could use for their reconstruction must be largely written off. When an inventory is taken, it will be seen that the little that is left, if divided among the victims, would not be enough to help any one of them appreciably. There can be no objection to confiscating part of what the Germans will still possess intact—their standard of living does not need to be higher than that of the most unfortunate of their victims. But it will not be possible to squeeze out much. A bankrupt Germany can contribute little to the reconstruction of the liberated countries. Indeed, if the Germans are really going to be allowed to work up to a better life, the amount they can furnish will be still further limited.

The world will have to accustom itself to the idea that morality and economics are at variance in this case just as they are in the case of a defaulter who has spent the money he stole. The man can be locked up and justice thereby served. But that will not bring back the money. Germany can be made to suffer economically—such action would be only just. But if that is done, no large repayments can be obtained.

Existing conditions affect the third, or political, principle even more drastically than the other two. With things as they are, how can one hope to democratize Germany? How much support can a democracy expect if it must first reduce the people's living standard to the lowest level ever reached and then keep it at this level for years? I am inclined to think that a democracy could not get off to a worse start. Inevitably a political system is identified with the conditions prevailing under it. If rules were to be formulated on how to establish a democracy, the first should run: don't try it unless you can foresee that living conditions are going to improve—if ever so slightly.

History will perhaps decide that the Allies made their greatest mistake in Italy when they began to play with the idea of democracy just as conditions were necessarily going from bad to worse. The rudimentary democratic system they set up was utterly powerless to better conditions or to keep them from deteriorating further—and in the eyes of the people it bore the odium of these conditions. It would have been wiser to let the AMG rule quite frankly and to put off democracy until a silver streak showed along the horizon.

In Germany the Allies will be obliged to reduce the standard of living still further and to keep it very low. If they attempt the difficult task of establishing democracy while conditions are at their worst, they will totally discredit democracy.

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BOOKS and the ARTS

A Tragic Situation

BLACK BOY. By Richard Wright. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

RICHARD WRIGHT'S "Black Boy" is a remarkably fine book. Perhaps a Negro's autobiography must always first appear under the aspect of sociology—a fact that is in itself a sociological comment—and "Black Boy" has its importance as a "document," a precise and no doubt largely typical account of Negro life in Mississippi. That it is the account of a tragic situation goes without saying. Here is the Negro poverty in all its sordidness; here is the calculated spiritual imprisonment of one racial group by another; here, above all, is the personal humiliation of Negro by white, the complex cruelty of the dominant race practiced as a kind of personal, spiritual necessity, sometimes direct and brutal, sometimes sophisticated with a sensual, guilty, horrible kindness.

But if "Black Boy" were no more than a document of misery and oppression, it would not have the distinction which in fact it does have. Our literature is full of autobiographical or reportorial or fictional accounts of misery and oppression. I am sure that these books serve a good purpose; yet I find that I feel a little coolness toward the emotions they generate, for it seems to me that too often they serve the liberal reader as a means of "escape." With honest kinds of "escape" there can be no quarrel—to find a moment's rest in dreams of heroic or erotic fulfilment is as justifiable as sleeping. But the moral "escape" that can be offered by accounts of suffering and injustice is quite another thing. To sit in one's armchair and be harrowed can all too easily pass for a moral or political action. We vicariously suffer in slippers and become virtuous: it is pleasant to exercise moral indignation at small cost; or to fill up emotional vacancy with good strong feeling at a safe distance; or to feel consciously superior to the brutal oppressor; or to be morally entertained by poverty, seeing it as a new and painful kind of primitivism which tenderly fosters virtue, or, if not virtue, then at least "reality"; or to indulge in self-pity by projecting it—very pleasant, very flattering, a little corrupting. Mr. Wright's autobiography, so far as it is an account of misery and oppression, does not tempt its readers to such pleasures. This is the mark of the dignity and integrity of the book.

In other words, the sociological aspect of "Black Boy" is the field—I will not say *merely* the field—for a notable exercise of the author's moral and intellectual power. It is difficult to describe that power except, as I have tried to do, by speaking of its effect, by remarking that it does not lead us into easy and inexpensive emotions, although the emotions into which it does lead us are durable. If I try further to understand this, I can only surmise that it comes about because the author does not wholly identify himself with his painful experience, does not, therefore, make himself a mere object of the reader's consciousness, does not make himself that different kind of human being, a "sufferer." He is not an object, he is a subject; he is the same kind of person as his reader, as complex, as free.

"Black Boy" is an angry book, as it ought to be—we would be surprised and unhappy if it were not. But the amount of anger that Mr. Wright feels is in proportion not only to the social situation he is dealing with; it is also in proportion to the author's desire to live a reasonable and effective life. For what a Negro suffers in the South—what, indeed, he might suffer in the North—calls for illimitable anger. But the full amount of anger that would be appropriate to the social situation alone would surely have the effect of quite destroying the person who felt it. And Mr. Wright, almost from infancy, seems to have refused to be destroyed. For example, by what, as he describes it, seems to have been a kind of blessed unawareness, even a benign stupidity, he simply could not understand the difference between black people and white. That his grandmother was so white as to be almost white may have had something to do with it. In any case, the young Richard had to be taught the difference, and it seems to have been at best a learned thing. This, to be sure, could scarcely have protected him from all psychic wounds and scars. But although he suffered, he seems never to have been passive. He seems thus to have been saved from the terrible ambivalences of the oppressed, from the self-indulgence, the self-pity, the ripe luxuriousness of sensitivity; and he does not, as the oppressed so often do, give himself or his oppressors a false glamour.

Mr. Wright's autobiography does not go beyond the time when he left the South at the age of nineteen. To me this is a disappointment, for Mr. Wright's life after his departure from the South is a great theme—the entrance of an aspiring and relatively ignorant young man into the full stream of national life is always a subject of the richest social and moral interest, and Mr. Wright's race makes that interest the richer. The chapters which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* under the title "I Tried to Be a Communist" are not included in "Black Boy"; they are not so interesting as they might be, although they have their point, but they suggest the kind of cultural and social experience I should like to see Mr. Wright explore. He has the directness and honesty to do it well. He has the objectivity which comes from refusing to be an object.

It is this objectivity that allows Mr. Wright to believe that oppression has done something more than merely segregate his people. He dares, that is, to take oppression seriously, to believe that it really does oppress, that its tendency is not so much to exempt the oppressed from the moral flaws of the dominant culture from which they are excluded as it is to give them other flaws of feeling and action. He himself suffered from the fierce puritanical religiosity of his own family. He can speak tenderly of the love that his mother gave him, but he can speak with sorrow and bitterness of the emotional bleakness in which he was reared.

> After I had outlived the shocks of childhood, after the habit of reflection had been born in me, I used to mull over

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WAS YALTA ANOTHER MUNICH?

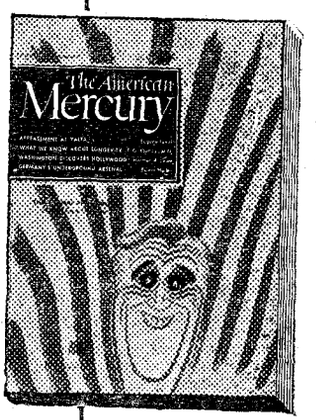
Chamberlain returned to a rejoicing world with a promise of "peace in our time." We know what happened. Did we repeat that mistake at Yalta? Will history lump our sacrifice of Poland and the Baltic States with the fate of Czecho-Slovakia? What happened to the Atlantic Charter? Was it re-affirmed, saved in part, indecently buried? Did we lay the foundation for a solid, lasting, principled peace, or did we plant the dragon's teeth of another and more terrible war? Was Yalta a compromise? Or was it once more—appeasement? . . . Eugene Lyons answers these questions in his searching, searing "Appeasement in Yalta," in the April MERCURY.

CAN WE LIVE TO BE 135?

That age has actually been attained, and if some have done it, more can do it. Not by stretching old age, but more gratifying, by stretching the years of our prime. What kills us off today as mere children of 40 or 50 or 60? Is it worry, tobacco, alcohol, faulty diet, lack of exercise? What progress is being made in medical research toward this dramatic and attainable extension of life? . . . An eminent medical authority, Dr. Theodore G. Klumpp, tells us in "What We Know About Longevity."

THE AMERICAN MERCURY—for April—OUT NOW

Where did the German planes and robot bombs come from after German industry had been so thoroughly bombed out? How will Franklin Roosevelt appear in the perspective of history? Do you know the terrific infant death toll from suffocation—the principal cause of accidental death of babies? What South American country is a model of democracy? Must a rattlesnake be coiled in order to strike? How permanent are the dreadful disfigurements caused by filariasis—the tropical disease that has caused such havoc among our Pacific forces? . . . These questions are arranged thus in startling juxtaposition to give some idea of the variety and scope of the April issue. There is a rare, exciting stimulus in a magazine that ranges thus among widely differing fields of interest . . . Here's the bill-of-fare. *Twelve Years of Roosevelt . . . Living in the Country . . . Washington Discovers Hollywood . . . My Children and the Progressive Schools . . . Germany's Underground Arsenal . . . Show-Window for Democracy . . . Art in a Squirrel Cage . . . The Saga of the Soo Canal . . . Molnar . . . The Tropical Disease, Filariasis . . . The English Character . . . Rattlesnakes: Facts and Fancies . . . Infants' Death by Suffocation . . . Our Gods Are Always Comic* . . . and the regular departments . . . *Poetry . . . The Library . . . The Check List* and the *Open Forum.*



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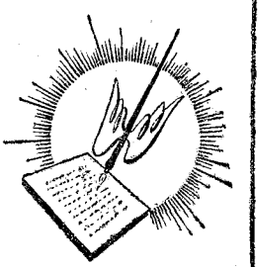

Credit for Courage

THE MERCURY is flattered by the number of letters it receives commending its courage. "No other magazine," runs a typical letter, "would have the courage to publish an article like that." If it takes courage to print unpopular truths, regardless of whose ox is gored, then we suppose we're courageous. But let us give credit where it is really due. It belongs to the thinkers and writers who make THE MERCURY what it is. We can promise them that they will never have to "pull punches" in articles written for THE AMERICAN MERCURY.

Lawrence E. Spivak PUBLISHER

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the strange absence of real kindness in Negroes, how unstable was our tenderness, how lacking in genuine passion we were, how void of great hope, how timid our joy, how bare our traditions, how hollow our memories, how lacking we were in those intangible sentiments that bind man to man, and how shallow was even our despair. After I had learned other ways of life I used to brood upon the unconscious irony of those who felt that Negroes led so passional an existence! I saw that what had been taken for our emotional strength was our negative confusions, our flights, our fears, our frenzy under pressure.

Whenever I thought of the essential bleakness of black life in America, I knew that Negroes had never been allowed to catch the full spirit of Western civilization, that they lived somehow in it but not of it. And when I brooded upon the cultural barrenness of black life, I wondered if clean, positive tenderness, love, honor, loyalty, and the capacity to remember were native with man. I asked myself if these human qualities were not fostered, won, struggled and suffered for, preserved in ritual from one generation to another.

I suppose that it is for saying this, or other things of a similar objectivity, that Mr. Wright has, as I have heard, come under the fire of his own people. And that, perhaps, is understandable. But if, like Mr. Wright, we believe that oppression is real, we must sadly praise his courage in seeing that it does not merely affect the body but also the soul. It is only a grim and ironic justice that the deterioration is as great in the oppressor as in the oppressed.

LIONEL TRILLING

BRIEFER COMMENT

Farm Against City

"TWO BILLION ACRE FARM," by Robert West Howard (Doubleday, Doran, $2.50), is a gusty, swift-moving, turbulent story of the growth of America and the struggle of American farmers to conquer a continent and to hold their own against a rising city civilization. It has the sweep as well as the staccato quality of Pare Lorentz's documentary film "The River," and perhaps its greatest value lies in the fact that its author sees America as a physical whole, a two-billion-acre farm, and thus brings a unifying concept to our thinking about agriculture and even perhaps about our political and economic life.

I know of few more fascinating accounts of how our early self-sufficing agriculture succumbed to a driving urban culture and a dominant money economy. Production for cash transformed American agriculture under the impetus of the expanding Industrial Revolution, the growing cities with their demand for food, and the wiles of distributors and middlemen seeking profit. The old securities, the old skills, were lost as farmers were driven into being "sellers in a buyers' market." As the nineteenth century advanced and rural people, once in the majority, became a minority in America, the city sat in the saddle. Engaged in meeting its demands, in building our vast nation, we failed to build a permanent agriculture, with the resulting evils of soil erosion and a growing race of landless tenants. Some men grew rich, but many grew poor, and the usual cleavages of the money economy appeared.

Perhaps what makes Mr. Howard's book most vital is his account of the men who developed this production-for-cash agriculture and its attendant distributive system. Here are stories of Swift and Armour, of Eli Whitney, of Borden, of Pillsbury, and of Luther Burbank. One of the most interesting is about William Saunders, who believed that cooperation was the farmer's salvation and who founded the Grange. Saunders is Mr. Howard's hero, and I think one grasps the author's concept through his feeling for this man.

But I, too, am a farmer, and though I share wholeheartedly Mr. Howard's belief in the farmer's need for cooperation and for becoming less dependent on the city and the money economy, and though I share his feeling about the American Farm Bureau, agree with a good deal of what he says about the Extension Service, and think with him that if democracy is to survive we must have more decentralization, yet I am quite sure more people are concerned about the solving of our rural problem than Mr. Howard admits. There is a bitterness in this book which underrates many of the constructive forces at work, and which somewhat dulls the edge of an otherwise interesting and important story.

P. ALSTON WARING

Ripe for Federation

FELIKS GROSS is a scholar and a fighter. Both capacities are reflected in "Crossroads of Two Continents" (Columbia University Press, $2), which is at once a systematic analysis of the basis for a democratic East Central European federation and a plea for such a development. Reading this book, one wonders why it is that in matters of international relations and government people are so slow to recognize and accept even the most elementary truths and solutions.

The second part of this study, which is the best reference book to be had on its subject, contains many important documents. There is, among other things, the "Declaration of Common Aims of the Independent Mid-European Nations" signed at Philadelphia in 1918 by T. G. Masaryk and eleven other representatives from Middle Europe. The group declared that "all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed," and that "there should be formed a league of nations of the world . . . for genuine and practical cooperation to secure justice and therefore peace among nations." These men in Philadelphia had seen the truth, but millions of others had not, and as a consequence the nations of East Central Europe, together with many others, have gone through the ordeal of the Second World War, have suffered once again the destruction of their cities, tyranny, and oppression.

As the end of this war approaches, men of good-will, who have seen the truth, are struggling again for a better world. The author of this book is one of them. He knows, as many of us do, that there is today an unavoidable need for "a global system of cooperation, of international solidarity." But he believes, and rightly, that in view of the existing differences among the various nations, the first logical step to such an organization is the regional federation. These federations should not be created by diplomatic maneuvering or

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imposed from above but should be the natural products of an "integral and democratic federalism" after equalization of the social and economic standards and strengthening of the democratic institutions within the various states.

The part of Europe which is today most in need of such a regional organization and in which the idea of a democratic federation is more ripe than anywhere else, is the eastern and central region. The special conditions and the history, nature, and extent of the federal movement in the countries of this area are analyzed in the first part of Mr. Gross's book. The author makes a really valuable contribution to the understanding of the problem and the need for its early solution by the peoples themselves, with the cooperation of the great powers.

BASIL J. VLAVIANOS

Exploring Old New England

"IN NO WAY, PERHAPS, could the visitor who would explore New England do better than to travel the routes of some of the old coaching roads." In this day of gas rationing it will be difficult to follow this advice of George Francis Marlowe, architect, artist, and writer, but it is easy, and extremely pleasant, to read his "Coaching Roads of Old New England; Their Inns and Taverns and Their Stories" (Macmillan, $3.50). Mr. Marlowe follows five of these old routes, discoursing in an informal manner about what remains and what used to be. The many drawings are a delightful addition to an unusual book.

RALPH ADAMS BROWN

Contemporary Educational Problems

AMONG THE WELTER OF BOOKS on education that have been streaming from the presses in the last few years V. T. Thayer's "American Education Under Fire" (Harper, $2.50) is one of few which combine topical interest and grasp of philosophic fundamentals. Through a series of related essays it takes the reader directly to the heart of central issues of contemporary educational discussion. It is also well written, free both of deadly pedagoguese that converts "students" into "educands" and of brilliant chatter that skirts basic problems without clarifying them. Dr. Thayer, who is educational director of the Ethical Culture schools, is an intelligent and sensitive advocate of progressive education. He defends it in this volume by positive statement and constructive programs as well as by vigorous criticism of alternative doctrines and practices.

Dr. Thayer's volume has the additional merit of showing that "progressive education" is not a label for a narrow set of principles but covers a broad movement within which there is considerable variation. He himself expresses the personalist wing. Although he recognizes the social components in the content and method of education, he never loses sight of the fact that it is the individual person, and his moral and intellectual integrity, that must be the educator's prime concern. In his discussion of whether members of fascist, Communist, and other totalitarian political parties should be allowed to teach in the public schools Dr. Thayer takes a position which is in substantial agreement with the declared policy of the Graduate School of the New School for Social Research: no one can teach honestly who permits

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himself to accept dictated truths in the field of science and scientific opinion. In the present temper of "liberal" thought this is extremely courageous. A questionable note is introduced in his contention that American education has helped to undermine respect for values by emphasizing the neutrality of scientific method toward life's ethical issues. I have never seen any evidence for this quaint notion. Before you can emphasize the neutrality of scientific method, you must at least give it curricular importance. As I read the evidence, science as subject matter is taught widely but the logic of scientific method hardly at all.

SIDNEY HOOK

FICTION IN REVIEW

INASMUCH as I had heard of Rumer Godden's "Take Three Tenses: A Fugue in Time" (Little, Brown, $2) as an experimental novel, I was surprised, on taking it up, to discover that it had appeared in a condensed form in the *Ladies' Home Journal*. Either, I reasoned, the women's-magazine field was bolder than I thought, or Miss Godden's book had been misrepresented. But by the time I had finished reading it I realized that neither assumption was entirely correct. It seems to me to be perfectly fair to call "Take Three Tenses" experimental: borrowing a method from music, it manages three tenses—three widely separated periods of time, that is—more or less simultaneously; and so far as I know, this is Miss Godden's innovation. The result is one chapter of bewilderment until we are oriented among the generations, and then a simple acceptance of what amounts to little more than a narrative trick. On the other hand, the story Miss Godden tells and her people are women's-magazine stock in trade. Whether Miss Godden is describing the beautiful and spirited Griselda and her unsatisfactory mid-nineteenth-century marriage to the gentleman called the Eye, or the love of Grizel and her flier in the latest generation, whether she is disclosing the tyranny of Griselda's daughter, Selina, or the weakness of Griselda's youngest son, Rolls, or following the ill-starred love of Rolls for his stepsister, Lark, there is scarcely a situation or emotion for which we haven't been prepared—sensitized or anaesthetized, according to our lights—by popular fiction and Hollywood.

Yet this isn't meant to deny all charm to "Take Three Tenses." Almost the contrary. I enjoyed it as I would enjoy an unselected but pleasant movie. For Miss Godden's characters make for only a soothing encounter—at worst they meet their fates with a reassuring British tranquillity; I like stories in which a house is an important member of the cast; and even the war-time servants of "Take Three Tenses" speak encouragingly of permanence and stability. In addition, Miss Godden not only handles her own words nicely but chooses excellent ones to quote—some of T. S. Eliot's, for instance.

And I can't help thinking, as I make the comparison between this novel and an evening at the neighborhood movie, what a pleasant job Hollywood could make of it if it matched Miss Godden's own light gift with a gifted director. Handled improperly, Miss Godden's fugue in time could of course lend itself beautifully to either pretension or confusion. But handled right it could be fun for the camera.

DIANA TRILLING

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Drama

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

TWENTY years ago the great success of "The Show-off" and "Craig's Wife" made George Kelly famous. Several unsuccessful works followed one after another, and "The Deep Mrs. Sykes" (Booth Theater) is his first play in eight years. Only to the older generation of theatergoers does his name mean much, and many of the morning-after reviews were grudging or worse. Yet I am not, I know, alone either in finding the new piece impressive or in realizing a certain important fact: Mr. Kelly no longer wins easy success because he no longer cares to win success of any kind on terms other than his own. The simple theatricalism which helped make "Craig's Wife" enormously popular has been conspicuously lacking in every play since, and the public has been offered instead the honest, careful, rather bleak dramatic studies of a man bent on anatomizing to the best of his ability human egotism and vulgarity as he sees them exhibited in the characters whom he has selected as his victims. Mr. Kelly's temperament is not, I should imagine, a very rich one. Even his acerbity is dry, and the admirable persons whom he draws to contrast with the egotists and vulgarians upon whom he lavishes his attention are usually stoically disdainful rather than warmly appealing. But his workmanship is fine as well as honest, and the effect of "The Deep Mrs. Sykes"—much the best of all the plays in this his second manner—is to me impressive and absorbing, even though the whole is sober and almost somber.

Several reviewers complained that the story is too slight. It would be, I think, more accurate to say that very little action takes place on the stage or, for that matter, is supposed to occur during the course of the play. What one is offered instead is the gradual unfolding and exploration of a situation which exists when the curtain rises and an analysis of the characters who have created it. In some respects the method is therefore rather more like that of the psychological novel than like that of the conventional play, and in this particular instance it is justified so far as I am concerned by the fact that from the rise to the fall of the curtain I was more completely absorbed than I often am in the contemporary theater.

The scene, though never specified, is apparently a wealthy suburb of Philadelphia; the central character is a cold, complacent woman whose maddening faith in the infallibility of her "feminine intuition" is only a device by which she justifies to herself her habit of assuming the worst about everyone. She "knows" that her husband is the mysterious admirer who has been sending lilacs to a somewhat spectacular neighbor, and she continues to the end to nurse this "knowledge" with a secret, superior smile, even though the unhappy alcoholic wife of the doctor is equally—and just as wrongly—sure that the doctor is the guilty one, even though she has been told who the lover really is. Unlike Craig's Wife she is overtaken by no calamity which punishes her. She ends as she begins; but she pays and always has paid the penalty of being herself, a despicable woman whom her husband goes on despising as he has despised her for twenty years.

Obviously in such a play everything depends upon the dialogue, the acting, and the direction. Mr. Kelly himself is responsible for the last, as well as for the selection of the actors, and he has seen to it that the two women upon whom the attention chiefly rests are superbly played—Mrs. Sykes with quiet, superior self-absorption by Catherine Willard and the more spectacular role of the unhappy alcoholic with a really terrible intensity by Jean Dixon, who has the most obviously big scene of the play when she exposes herself in a drunken tirade, and who makes that scene unforgettably tragic. But it is, above all, in the dialogue—usually written in a low key though curiously and incisively convincing—that Mr. Kelly's skill shows itself most impressively. Perhaps it is too quiet, too far from either the wisecrack or the purple passage, to please most tastes, but two specimen sentences—inaccurately quoted from memory—may serve to illustrate a certain calm deadliness. When the doctor's wife, tipsy as usual, is asked why she is sure the mysterious admirer must be somebody's husband, she replies, irritated at so stupid a question, "Why, it's got to be. There is nothing interesting about two people being lovers unless there is some reason why they shouldn't be." And when, near the end, Mr. Sykes is asked by his son why Mrs. Sykes was so sure the former was the guilty man, he merely says quietly, "What do you suppose a woman's intuition is for?" The author of those lines must, I imagine, find La Rochefoucauld congenial reading.

Mr. Kelly is too much a moralist, even too conventional a moralist, to be a cynic, and I must say that the little sermon preached at the end by Mr. Sykes, who urges his son to stay with the wife he no longer loves even as Mr. Sykes has stayed with his own wife, seems to me to make out a very weak case for the sacredness of a union irksome to one of the parties, and it is difficult to see who has profited from the preservation of the marriage between the speaker and his despicable mate. But that does not keep the play from being both impressive and absorbing.

Films

JAMES AGEE

PRACTICALLY YOURS" is an interestingly nasty Colbert-MacMurray comedy about a war hero on leave, a girl who gets the mistaken impression that he loves her, and some of their misadventures with her boss, her white-collar suitor, the newsreels, the radio, bond selling, a commercial photographer, and a war wife played straight. In a roughly typical scene the leads watch what has been done to them on the screen in the darkness of a newsreel theater, the hero cannot keep his disgust to himself, and an inflamed civilian turns and busts him in the jaw. In another they are aboard a rush-hour subway car when, by nightmarish chance, his emergency life-raft inflates. It is one measure of the movie quality of these and many more scenes and bits of business and detail in the picture that—though few of them are done as well as they might be—they are much better on the screen than they can be made to sound in words. Taken as a whole, the picture doesn't amount to much; the same cynicism which is responsible for most of its good points has helped take care that it won't. But lurking in a great many odd corners of the show there is a really remarkable amount and variety of coldly perceptive hatred.

"Without Love" is a satiny translation of a Philip Barry play; I like it all right and have very little to say for or against it. Unlike Mr. Barry, I don't find the expression "by gum" charming on lips which use it for charm's sake, and enjoy even less the heroine's recalling, of her dying husband, that he "grinned that grin of his." But a good deal of the dialogue is happy to hear and happier in its skill; Katherine Hep-

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burn and Spencer Tracy are exactly right for their jobs; it is good to see Lucille Ball doing so well with a kind of role new to her; and I have a hard time braking myself against the idea that Keenan Wynn is the best actor in Hollywood, rather than just a very good one indeed.

I am of that majority opinion about Tallulah Bankhead which will forgive her anything, and likes her so well that that seldom comes into question; but in spite of her randy impersonation of Catherine the Great, I did not much enjoy "A Royal Scandal." Possibly I am too owlish a democrat to be sufficiently thrilled by the thought that queens and the women in the windows are centaurs under the skin; and probably I take too seriously the fact that bawdiness, especially "sophisticated" bawdiness, bores and annoys me beyond mailable description unless it is handled with enough style or energy to absolve it, through heart or magic, of its infantilism. But so far as I know, it's just that nothing was one-tenth well enough done, and that all the laughs are played for at their cheapest, far down the ramp. I suspect that if I saw Ernst Lubitsch's original version of this story, "Forbidden Paradise," again, I might think a good deal of his pantomime just as tiresomely prurient at its roots; but I am almost certain it would stand up even so as a much more delicate and forceful and amusing version. I wish this twenty-year-old show were revived, both for its own sake as I remember it, and because between the two versions I believe you could get a pretty good measure of the difference between talking and silent pictures. I realize, of course, that talking pictures can be better than "A Royal Scandal," and as good as anything silent, and conceivably even better; but in order even to try to be so, they have to know the value of pantomime, and they have to know when to shut up.

Very late in the *n*th day after any proper one, I want to add to Manny Farber's, and Orson Welles's, my own respect for the Monogram melodrama "When Strangers Marry." The story has locomotor ataxia at several of its joints, and the intensity of the telling slackens off toward the end; but taking it as a whole I have seldom, for years now, seen one hour so energetically and sensibly used in a film. Bits of it, indeed, gave me a heart-lifted sense of delight in real performance and perception and ambition which I have rarely known in any film context since my own mind, and that of moving-picture making, were both sufficiently young. Thanks to that, I can no longer feel by any means so hopeless as I have, lately, that it is possible to make pictures in Hollywood that are worth making. When I think even no farther than of the people who made this, and of the Val Lewton contingent, and of the various journeymen who put so much venom into "Practically Yours," I know there are enough people out there of real ability to turn the whole place upside down. I doubt they will ever do it, partly because I doubt it could be done without a good deal of gunfire, and that on no parochial scale. But quite a few of them mean business, and some of them are wedging out small ways, at least, of doing it.

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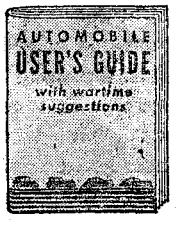

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Art

CLEMENT GREENBERG

ACADEMICISM shows itself nowhere more nakedly than in painting and sculpture, being much more immediately depressing there than in literature. One brief glance at the recent annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design was enough to fill the visitor with gloom. Van Wyck Brooks's resentment of advanced literature's lack of "affirmation" would find greater justification if it were directed to backward art. These painters of purple and emerald landscapes, of glazed figurines and wax flowers, these nigglers, these picklers of nudes and bakers of mud pies plumb depths of negation and pessimism T. S. Eliot or Joyce, much less Picasso, could never remotely reach. But it is in the very nature of academicism to be pessimistic, for it believes history to be a repetitious and monotonous decline from a former golden age. The avant-garde, on the other hand, believes that history is creative, always evolving novelty out of itself. And where there is novelty there is hope.

The hope shining from Piet Mondrian's white canvases with their criss-crossed bands of black has little to do with his platonizing theories except in so far as they express an almost naive faith in the future. Rationalized décor —rectilinear lines and bright, clear colors—means the conviviality and concord of an urban tomorrow stripped of the Gothic brambles and rural particularities that retarded life in the past. Mondrian's pictures are an attempt to create conditions of existence and stabilize life itself. They are not "interesting" the way Titians are; you are supposed to go on with life in their presence. Aside from the fact that he was a pioneer who pushed the implications of modern art to their last consequences, Mondrian was one of the greatest painters of our time. Unfortunately, the memorial show at the Museum of Modern Art (through May 13) includes too few of his works to give a really adequate notion of the scale of his art and the heights it reached in his best periods. (I realize that Mondrian's paintings need lots of empty wall around them, but then the show should have received more gallery space.) It is also unfortunate that the white areas in many of his pictures have by now become discolored or dirty. The artist himself should have foreseen that; and while his art is inseparable from the

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qualities induced by canvas and oil, he might have done more wisely and equally beautifully had he used tempera on board or gesso panel. Perhaps the fact that he made many changes and over-paintings during execution kept him away from the relative inflexibility of tempera. In any case it suffices that he put together pictures that are completely at rest—solid, unshakable—and at the same time tense and dramatic.

Along with the memorial exhibition a sixty-four-page book containing six of Mondrian's essays on art has appeared, edited by Robert Motherwell and Harry Holtzman (Wittenborn and Company, $2.25). (The assistance of Charmion von Wiegand, who practically put one of the essays into English, is for some reason or other not acknowledged.) Acquaintance with Mondrian's theories may expand one's idea but will hardly deepen one's experience of his work. They are real feats of speculative imagination but seem to have been more a rationalization of his practice than a spur to it. Theories were perhaps felt necessary to justify such revolutionary innovations. But Mondrian committed the unforgivable error of asserting that one mode of art, that of pure, abstract relations, would be absolutely superior to all others in the future.

The late Kandinsky, Mondrian's only true compeer, whose life work is reviewed in a splendid exhibition at the Museum of Non-Objective Painting (through April 15), fell somewhat short of Mondrian in practice but maintained a better concept of what was going on. His chief mistake was to draw too close an analogy between painting and music. And while he did not give "non-objective" art the absolute primacy, he did hold that only through the non-objective could "absolute" works of art be approximated. Like Mondrian he spoke of "liberation"—from the past, from nature—and was optimistic, anticipating a future of inner certainty and the "growing realization of the spiritual." (As far as I can make out, Kandinsky's "spiritual" means simply intensity and seriousness and has no religious connotations.)

Kandinsky was more a landscape painter at heart than anything else. Even before developing his abstract "lyrical" style he seems, according to the evidence, to have proved himself the best of all the *Blaue Reiter* artists in Germany. His parti-colored expressionist landscapes are better than we, who have been brought up on the School of Paris, may rightly realize.

Jackson Pollock's second one-man show at Art of This Century (through April 14) establishes him, in my opinion, as the strongest painter of his generation and perhaps the greatest one to appear since Miró. The only optimism in his smoky, turbulent painting comes from his own manifest faith in the efficacy, for him personally, of art. There has been a certain amount of self-deception in School of Paris art since the exit of cubism. In Pollock there is absolutely none, and he is not afraid to look ugly—all profoundly original art looks ugly at first. Those who find his oils overpowering are advised to approach him through his gouaches, which in trying less to wring every possible ounce of intensity from every square inch of surface achieve greater clarity and are less suffocatingly packed than the oils. Among the latter, however, are two—both called Totem Lessons—for which I cannot find strong enough words of praise. Pollock's single fault is not that he crowds his canvases too evenly but that he sometimes juxtaposes colors and values so abruptly that gaping holes are created.

The ninth annual exhibition of the American Abstract Artists at Riverside Museum (through April 15) suffers from a lack, not of optimism, but of strong personalities. The rules laid down by the epigones of cubism are a little too carefully observed. Some of the animation that comes with surrealism is needed. Three women painters, however, show a good deal of promise: Nell Blaine—whose large white picture struck me as the best in the show—Fannie Hillsmith, and Eleanor de Laittre. There is one colorist present, Giorgio Cavallon, who may come to more than anyone else once he controls his design.

The large European Artists in America show at the Whitney Museum (through April 11) represents international, *ipso facto* School of Paris, art. All the works were executed in this country except those of a single artist. The mood is one of resigned optimism—everybody is glad to be here and alive—coupled with that kind of liveliness, not necessarily identical with vitality, which skilled performers create in their effort to attract attention. The exhibition abounds in finished performances, but very little in it goes deep. More than half the painters on hand show surrealist or neo-romantic affects—which is another way of being lively. Surprisingly enough, the sculpture section makes a better impression, on the whole, than the painting. Lipchitz's granite Return of the Child deserves to be called

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great, while Max Ernst shows himself to be an immeasurably better sculptor than painter—there is almost no organic relation between his abstract sculpture and his diabetic, prematurely worm-eaten pictures. Also present are a good Mondrian and a hopeful picture called Unfolding Stratum, by Herbert Bayer. Léger's oils are stronger than they have usually been of late; Léger always knows how to put a picture together, but he repeats his design to the point of stereotype—and his little touches of shading create volumes that are overinflated with respect to every other element.

Dance

B. H. HAGGIN

OF THE two additional works of Balanchine which the Monte Carlo Russe has presented at New York's City Center "Mozartiana" is a little classic ballet which offers still another example of his fresh and individual use of traditional materials to fill out the traditional suite form, and which delights eye and mind with its orchestration of movement so well contrived for the Mozart-Tchaikovsky music, the lovely Berard set and costumes, the capacities and personalities of the dancers—with a subtly intricate opening solo for Lazovsky, some charmingly gay things for Danilova and Franklin to do at their first appearance, an adagio in grand style for Danilova as the climax, a delicious little cadenza for her in the finale. And Balanchine—who for each of his ballets had made out of the elements of the classic *pas de deux* something new, wonderful in the way those elements are transformed and linked in a continuous statement with meaning in the context of the ballet—now has used them to create for Danilova a "Pas de Deux" which stands by itself with the effect of a homage to the style and to her art in its execution. The first yearning phrases of a superb piece of Tchaikovsky ballet music bring her in on her points, led by Franklin, with an arm rising slowly above her head to create a regal pose and then to continue in the circlings that make her sustained movement across the stage breath-taking. And one is held spellbound by the splendors that follow, in which there is maintained, in all the variation of pace and character, a continuity of impetus, movement, and emotion that builds up a single dance statement, grand and impassioned, and achieving in its few minutes an overwhelming intensity and impact.

The Monte Carlo management has celebrated the twenty-fifth year of Balanchine's career as a choreographer; but it might well have celebrated the first year of his association with the company. For in that year he has enriched its repertory with five beautiful works, one of them, "Danses Concertantes," outstanding in its originality and power; and not only in the perfect performances of these works but in the perfected performances of some older ones there is evidence of his work with the dancers, whom he has taught to execute classic movements with the precision, clarity, and grace that make them effective. Balanchine's own "Serenade" is an older piece in which order reveals again the beauty formerly obscured by confusion. Very much older is "Coppelia," which in its freshened state and with Danilova's enchanting performance is a delight. And the treatment is being applied with as good results to modern-style works: in the performance I saw of "Rodeo" everything seemed to have been set once more in right relation to everything else, presumably by Agnes de Mille herself—which made it a very effective and satisfying performance even without Franklin's brilliance in the lead; and Bliss was otherwise very good in the part.

But the job of rehabilitation is not yet completed. The management still offers works like "Red Poppy," "Snow Maiden," "Scheherazade"; it still offers performances like the ones of "Bluebird" and "Le Beau Danube" that I saw. Krassovska is a technically accomplished dancer with great personal sweetness; she is excellent in ingenue parts like the daughter in "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" and was charming in Danilova's role in "Gaité Parisienne"; but she hadn't the sharp, glittering brilliance that "Bluebird" requires and that could have stood up against the high-powered exhibitionism of Danielian. In "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme," where his matchstick torso is concealed by the costume and he is restrained by the choreography (or possibly by the choreographer), he is a good dancer. But not in classic parts. And not in "Le Beau Danube."

In a note in the program the Monte Carlo management has declared itself "an organization free from any commercial influences, [viewing] our mission only as a service to the great public." That being so, I should like to point out one service which I think it ought to perform for that public. The audiences at the City Center have appeared to enjoy "Danses Concertantes" and "Mozartiana"; but they also have enjoyed "Red Poppy" and "Scheherazade" and "Frankie and Johnny"; and I think that where it is dealing with an uncritical public which enjoys good and bad equally the Monte Carlo management will best serve that public by giving it only good ballets to enjoy, and in this way cultivating in it a taste for the good which will develop into the good taste that will enable it to discriminate between good and bad on its own. So with performance. The audiences at the City Center have applauded the good performances, but also the bad; they have applauded the "Pas de Deux" of Danilova and Franklin, but also the "Bluebird" of Krassovska and Danielian; and indeed they have on occasion applauded bad more thunderously than good: in a "Pas de Deux Classique" I saw last fall there was Danilova making one movement after another that took one's breath away with its assured, unobtrusively achieved perfection and grace, there was Danielian hurling himself around with ostentatious violence, and there was the audience applauding Danilova moderately now and then after something obviously difficult, but roaring its answer to Danielian's every exhibitionistic appeal for applause, and doing the same thing at their individual curtain calls. And here again I think the management should give its audiences only good performances to enjoy, and in this way cultivate in them the taste and discrimination they now lack. Until it can secure Youskevitch again for classic roles it should impose on Danielian at least the external appearance of Youskevitch's quiet assurance and modesty; it should impose a similar restraint on him in "Le Beau Danube"; and if he cannot be restrained he should be replaced.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Letters to the Editors

FORUM ON PEACE-TIME CONSCRIPTION

[The number of letters we have received from readers on the problem of peace-time conscription indicates widespread interest in the subject. We have selected a few for publication here and will follow with more next week.]

Too Cynical

Dear Sirs: Mr. Bolté's article in *The Nation* for March 21 is entitled Conscription Between Wars. If there is a prize for the most undiplomatic title of the year, Mr. Bolté gets it. But he subjects us to more than the "realistic" cynicism of a title. After justly demolishing the sentimental arguments of many of the proponents of conscription, he submits that it is not the answer to the requirements of a United Nations police force; rather such conscript forces are to be utilized for the purpose of fighting our present allies.

Perhaps conscription itself would not "show the world our lack of faith in international cooperation," but Mr. Bolté's article certainly does, for though he puts the rationale for conscription into the mouths of the "Combined Chiefs of Staff," he adopts that rationale as the basis for his argument.

Conscription is not to be a part of the new collectivism; it is to be an alternative to its failure. It is to provide an army for fighting England or Russia—or both. The commercial aggression, unilateral diplomacy, and economic depression which are to cause such a war are endowed by Mr. Bolté with an inevitability which presupposes World War III. If his article indicates the line of argument which is about to be taken by conscription's liberal advocates, I suggest that they withhold their fire at least until the ratification of a United Nations charter by both ourselves and our allies.

It is hardly diplomatic, even if it be "realistic," to inform your allies and proposed co-workers in the greatest international experiment yet essayed that you are preparing a mighty army for the sole purpose of fighting them. It is even less diplomatic to make such a statement in a manner which indicates skepticism concerning the international experiment and in a tone foreboding failure and inevitable war. Nor is it wise for the very apostles of internationalism to confess such little faith in the world organization of which they must be the champions in the yet far-from-won battle with isolationism.

We have bitterly reproached the last generation which succumbed to the cynical realism of the Lodges and the apostles of normalcy. Yet Mr. Bolté's "realism" is but the precursor of a new ultra-nationalism, militant and chauvinistic. If men of his stamp turn cynic, we shall not need another "little band of wilful men" to set us on the road to the next world war.

LINCOLN LAUTERSTEIN, Vice-Chairman,
American Veterans' Committee

New York, March 24

Too Optimistic

Dear Sirs: Whether or not the army contemplates keeping in peace time the number of regulars, guardsmen, and reserves Dr. Nollen names (your issue of February 24), it has made no such statement. The army and the navy have announced that they believe it will be in the national interest after this war to select each year all fit young men at whatever age from eighteen to twenty-one or twenty-two will least interfere with each individual's education and career, train them, and fit them to take part, if need be, in national defense. The number each year will be about 850,000. They will receive one year's training and will not be liable, as the true conscripts of other nations are, to overseas, garrison, strike, or any other duty save training. They will never be recalled for any other service unless within six years (according to H. R. 515, the May bill) Congress declares a national emergency. Instructors will be largely reservists, not regulars. The peace-time equipment of these 850,000 men, plus 600,000 regulars and guardsmen, if that be the correct figure, would clearly be a relatively small fraction of what our present forces of ten million require in combat.

Dr. Nollen overelaborates what our army and navy authorities propose for our future defense. He oversimplifies the complex problem of assuring that defense by saying that to win safety from attack through international cooperation we must render ourselves defenseless. But surely, to win safety from crime through the courts we would not demobilize the police forces! Dr. Nollen should reconsider his optimistic words. I too was an optimist in 1919, when, as a reporter, I covered the Paris "peace" conference. Surely we were strong then, and the world had learned its lesson—no more wars!

The proposal of peace-time universal military training is not out of harmony with the Dumbarton Oaks scheme, which provides for the use of military power to enforce peace and establishes a military branch of the United Nations. It is an important part of an important project to preserve by realistic measures the peace and security of the United States and of the world.

THOMAS M. JOHNSON

New York, March 3

Arms and the Peace

Dear Sirs: If the Big Three merely return to a camouflaged status quo, with the powers juggling for position for the next war, then I would say that disarmament of Germany and Japan does not mean a thing; in order to have allies in the next conflict either Russia or Britain will see to it, as the latter did last time, that one or both of them are rearmed contrary to all peace treaties.

If we do not use our influence and power now to eliminate this threat, reactionary intrigue in our own government and in the British Foreign Office will maintain such conditions; our peace-time army will not be an army of, by, and for the people but a force that may some day be rather inimical to their true interests. Until world conditions have undergone the test of practical experience I see no hurry to make any decision about our future army. We have a reserve of men trained for this war and an overwhelming navy and air force, and nobody for the next decade or so will be in any position to challenge us to armed combat. I rather feel that we should concentrate all our influence on a peaceful settlement of world affairs and the crushing by our influence of any Nazi-fascist tendency that may show its face anywhere.

HERBERT VAN KAAN

New York, March 21

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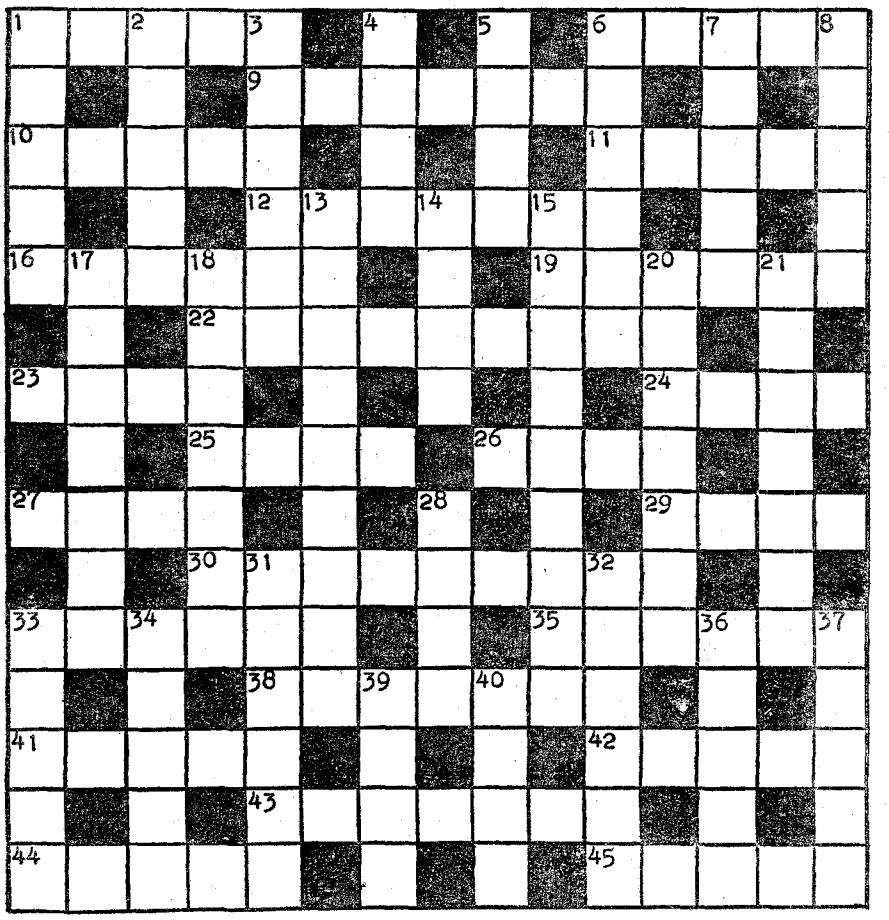
Crossword Puzzle No. 110

By JACK BARRETT



ACROSS

1 Second nature
6 Cessation (hyphen, 3-2)
9 Train
10 Machine-gun named after its inventor
11 Rob 'em in the old card game
12 Pat is given the bird and made an example of
16 Letters pronounced through the nose
19 They make things run smoothly
22 Rightness of changing a cruet diet
23 Sam and I in old Thailand
24 Man cannot make a worm, yet he creates these by the dozen!
25 Alight
26 Object of worship
27 No fool of a herbalist
29 This islet will come back to ye
30 Anything but stinking of money, by the sound of it
33 Fogg's partner in the Bardell *vs.* Pickwick case
35 Behead these gangways and they still sound the same
38 Maroons
41 Air raid signal that should put you on it
42 Altar (anag.) (two words, 3 and 2)
43 A letter from an apostle
44 In pigeon English, Greek
45 Terns in tears

DOWN

1 They hanged him on the gallows prepared for Mordecai
2 Cartons
3 Solomon built one for Jehovah
4 Petition for clothes?
5 Horse hair
6 Lied on (anag.)
7 "Where MacGregor sits, there is the head of the -----"
8 Their heavenly lays make us heirs of truth and pure delight
13 Here the secondary spelling is also superior
14 Three, if disorderly, might cause a riot
15 He trusted in God, but kept his powder dry
17 In a moat (anag).
18 Short of certain limbs
20 Short of certain other limbs
21 Badge of the House of Lancaster (two words, 3 and 4)
28 A first-class smoker
31 Corset it might be a London character
32 Nurse
33 One of Nature's secrets
34 It exists only in the imagination
36 Live and — this
37 They cover the holes in your socks
39 A material and moral wreck
40 They may have a screw loose somewhere

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 109

ACROSS:—1 FACETIOUS; 6 LEWES; 9 WEEK-END; 10 SEVERAL; 11 RIO; 12 INCHES; 13 WENT; 15 SEA SCOUT; 16 FISTIC; 18 ONAGER; 20 OPENINGS; 23 EXES; 24 MARIAN; 25 PUG; 28 EXTRACT; 29 INTRUST; 30 SERGE; 31 DOTTERELS.

DOWN:—1 FEWER; 2 CREMONA; 3 THE BIRCHES; 4 OLD SCOUT; 5 SISTER; 6 LOVE; 7 WARMEST; 8 SOLSTICES; 14 MIGNONETTE; 15 SMOKELESS; 17 OPTIMIST; 19 ABETTER; 21 NEPTUNE; 22 WANTED; 26 GATES; 27 PATE.

A Citizens' Army?

Dear Sirs: Irving Lipkowitz bases his argument for a citizens' army (March 3) on assumptions which he does not prove. He assumes that either a citizen or a professional army is a post-war necessity in this country. He indicates that "the citizen army is a better bulwark against fascism and militarism than just 'no conscription'"; that such a training program will prevent the growth of a powerful professional military group; that the reservist citizen will be more eager to avoid another war and better prepared to do so; that those who oppose a conscript citizen army without plans for a volunteer army are in fact advocates of a professional army.

I can't take all this on faith as Mr. Lipkowitz asks me to. And isn't the phrase "citizens' army" a beautiful euphemism to avoid the unpleasant connotations of compulsory labor? More important, however, the central question remains untouched: Is a peace-time conscript army a military need?

VINCENT H. WHITNEY

Middletown, Conn., March 6

Conscription vs. Peace

Dear Sirs: Most of Dr. Nollen's argument was sound, but it failed to mention that in a very few years expenditures for a proposed "citizen army" would equal or exceed all other normal costs of the federal government. On his return from Yalta the President said that he looked for the lightening in some measure of the burden of armaments. Will it be effected by adding billions to the budget for conscription? Mr. Lipkowitz implies that "fully implemented enforcement machinery" to keep a "durable peace" means conscription; common sense tells me that the bigger the trained armies the more unmanageable the enforcement machinery will become, and the less likely to be successful.

"Our congenital distaste for military matters must be disciplined," says Mr. Lipkowitz. What nonsense! Must we be taught to seek out and enjoy bubonic plague? In order to have an international machinery to maintain peace, there is no more need to make everyone a soldier than there is to teach everyone the use of a night stick in order to maintain a municipal police force. The argument for peace-time conscription involves a determination to smash our hatred of war and things military and is an insidious threat to future world peace.

ASA M. HUGHES

Landsdale, Pa., March 3

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